WOULD CHRIST BELONG TO A LABOR UNION?

REV. CORTLAND MYERS, D.D.

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To the Carpenter of Nazareth.

James And His
Cortland Myers.

Would Christ Belong to a Labor Union?

OR

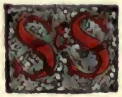
HENRY FIELDING'S DREAM

BY

CORTLAND MYERS, D.D.

AUTHOR OF

"MIDNIGHT IN A GREAT CITY," "WHY MEN DO NOT GO TO CHURCH," "MAKING A LIFE," ETC.



NEW YORK

STREET & SMITH, PUBLISHERS

238 WILLIAM STREET

(1900)

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This book is not all fiction. A large part of it is from real life.

THE AUTHOR.

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Would Christ Belong to a Labor Union?

CHAPTER I.

STOPPED BY A STRANGE QUESTION.

"Would Christ belong to a labor union?" was the question that almost startled Henry Fielding as it met his eyes at the corner of the street on the church bulletin. He was on his way to work in the early morning, and had already been detained at home, and also a moment by a friend on the way; but he could not pass on without pausing in front of that peculiar question and reading the smaller letters beneath it.

It was an announcement of the services for the next day in the church. The special sermon, the minister's name, the attractive music and a warm welcome for all.

"Well," said he, "I have not been to church in so long a time that I would not know how to act, but

I would like to hear what he has to say about that. If I live until to-morrow, I am going to change the Sunday programme and go to church."

He hastened on and turned around to glance at the other side of the bulletin.

"That is not such a strange subject after all," thought he. "The strange thing about it is that the preacher and the church are asking it."

Henry Fielding was a noble fellow in heart and purpose. He had an unselfish disposition; his ambitions were kingly, but they were thwarted by circumstances. No young man ever came out of a more truly religious home. His early life was enriched by the family prayer, the church service, and the Sunday school. He had learned whole chapters of the Bible for prize and pleasure both. His home was among the hills of Vermont. A small farm, a small mortgage, a continuous struggle, and a rigid economy on the part of his parents were the environment of those boyhood days. His father had died when Henry was but ten years of age, leaving his mother broken-hearted and in broken health to fight the hard and continuous battle alone. He was the eldest of three children—a sister, Elsie, of eight, and a brother, Will, of six. Those years of his responsibility and his mother's heroism made an impression upon him never to be obliterated. The mortgage became no less; rather, as most mortgages go, it be-

came more. The interest had to come, and the eggs and butter sold, instead of eaten. Each year made him understand that he must bear more of the burden.

It brought him into manhood before his time, and drew some of the sweetness and necessity out of real life. It is the tragedy of life to be an old young man.

The natural and the ideal are to come with the years, and not force them. But circumstances swung the sceptre and said, "Give up school; cover your eyes in front of other opportunities. Know not envy and thrust your jack-knife into the very heart of dissatisfaction. Stand by your mother!" The years passed by, and never saw his courage fail.

Will came to be a young man of eighteen, and seemed to have more liking for the farm than his brother had ever been able to force into his heart or activity.

Then Henry began to make his plans to go to the great city, learn a trade, become skilled, save his money, make an invention, have a manufactory of his own, get rich, help his sister, care for his mother, and forget forever bare feet, mortgage, butterless bread, etc.

Oh, what dreams we have in the daytime! Almost as strange as at night, and almost as far from reality. Yet it is better to dream than not.

He now had been in the city several years, and worked hard and without any flagging zeal or determination, but a haze had been creeping across the star of hope in his sky.

This part of his life was not just as he had planned or wished, but he had enough of the divinity of mankind in him not to be easily conquered. He did not try to push back the current, but he was not the one to be drowned in its waters.

One day as he stood at his work, the man nearest him heard him say, "to-morrow."

He said, "Henry, what are you talking about?"

"I did not know that I was talking about anything," said Henry; "but I do know that I was keeping up a serious kind of thinking."

"Well, you were thinking aloud this time. I heard a part of it, anyway."

"I am not afraid to tell you what I was thinking about. I was getting gloomy and almost in a fit of despondency. Plans fail so quickly and completely, and to-day seems especially dark to me. In the secret silence of my soul I was saying over and over again: 'There'll be another day.' If you heard me say 'to-morrow,' that is the reason."

His sister Elsie had written him a letter the day before, telling him of her deep desire to secure some advantages which the country did not furnish, and which she never could receive unless she could come

to the city and have the best of training. She was in a kind of prison up there in the mountains, and there was no future for her. Her friends told her that she had a wonderful musical talent if it could only be cultivated. She played the organ for them in their little church, and often sang as no one else there could sing. She seemed the larger part of the church service.

All this had only been the fuel on the burning desire already in her heart to know more and be more. Mother said she would sell the farm; but that would not help—rather, it might hinder. Henry was the only one to ask what could be done.

This was the hard problem in his hand now. That letter was for a moment more puzzling and important to him than the map of Europe to Napoleon before the Battle of Waterloo. At last he stamped his foot and declared that this was more necessary than anything else, and ought to be done at once, even if all the other plans of the years' making should be opposed or even destroyed by it.

He was careful in the use of his pronouns, and uttered the "you" a score of times where once he spoke the "I." Elsie was told to come to the city, and he would furnish two rooms. She could keep house for him and herself, and take her music lessons. It would require all his earnings and destroy the possibility of saving, but the great lesson he had

learned in the school of life had already taught him what it was to save—that hoarded treasure might not be saving.

"This," he said, "is the best method of saving, to place it in the bank of my sister's life and let it draw interest forever. If I cannot get what I had planned, let her secure the object of her life. Perhaps in her ambition attained is the realization of my own."

Elsie had come to the city. The plans had been perfected, the two rooms were furnished, or rather fixed so that a brother and sister who loved each other and understood the object of their toil and sacrifice, could live in them.

The one had to be parlor, kitchen, sitting-room, library and Henry's sleeping-room. A lounge at one side was his bed, a small stove was sufficient for heating the rooms and the cooking of their food, a few chairs and a table, some pictures, and everything without an atom of dust upon it and spotlessly clean.

Elsie's training made two rooms the same as a palace to her, and taught her that there was no economy in dirt out of its place.

It was Saturday night. The familiar step was heard on the stairway. The door opened. Elsie was in the other room, but shouted, "Hello!" before Henry had closed the door behind him. She hastened out to arrange the table as attractively as

she possibly could. She asked him all about his day, and if he was tired; then for a moment sat at the table looking directly at him, her great eyes full of admiration for him. He was almost her idol; at least, her ideal.

Suddenly he said: "Elsie, I am going to church to-morrow."

"What," said she, "do you mean it? I am so glad. What makes you say that? Why, I would think you were perfect if you would only go to church every Sunday."

"I won't promise you that, but I will go to-morrow morning if you will go where I want you to."

"Why, certainly, I will go wherever you would like, and I will give up my church any time if you would only attend some other one with me. Really, Henry, this has been the only bitter drop in all my cup—you having nothing to do with the church."

"Well, we won't discuss that now," said Henry; "but, anyway, I will go to-morrow. Perhaps it is only curiosity, but I will be there just the same, and that will in itself please you."

"What is the object of your curiosity, and where do you want to go?"

"I am going to that church on the corner of North avenue and Thirteenth street. The minister's name I have almost forgotten. The last name is Dowling, and I think the first name is David. That is a small

matter, anyhow. I never notice the ministers' names, and I had never heard of him until this morning; in fact, I don't know any of them, and don't know as I care to."

"Oh, Henry, do not say that! You don't understand either yourself or them."

"I know enough about the churches and ministers to know that they have lost the spirit of the Bible, and have no real relation to the greatest needs of to-day."

"Wait a minute, Henry. They are trying to save the people, and that is the greatest need of this and all other days. What does saving people mean? If it does not mean saving them here and now, and saving the society in which they live, it does not mean anything."

"Better get this world right before they talk so much about the next."

"Oh Henry, that is not the way Christ talked!"

"Yes, that is just the way Christ talked, and lived, too, if I remember the story right. Of course, I have not had much to do with it lately."

"I am sure that you do not understand the Gospel, or the purpose and work of the ministers and churches, or you would not feel just as you say."

"Now, Elsie, there is not any use in talking to me about this, because my convictions are fixed, and I believe in good reasons. I did not give up church

and prayer and all my early training without sufficient cause. You have not seen what I have, nor have you passed through some of my experiences. A good many things ought to be made right, and the churches ought to be the first to enter into the work; but they are the last, and most of them stand on the corner of the streets like sepulchres for dead people, instead of great centres where the business of Christianity is being transacted and the wrongs of human society are being righted. The workingmen do not cross the threshold of these tombs today. There are one hundred and fifty men where I work, and only three of them go to church. There are one hundred and forty-seven heathen right in that one place, and I am one of them—not by choice, but by compulsion."

"I cannot argue with you, Henry, but I am sure you are prejudiced, and don't really understand what the Gospel mission is, or what the churches are doing. You talk about the wrongs of society, and all this, but what would this great city be without the churches?"

Henry turned in his chair and drummed on the table with his fork, and said, with a disgusted air: "It couldn't be much worse. Say, Elsie, do you know that most working men think that the Church has not one particle of sympathy for them, but caters to the rich and well-to-do in order to be well sup-

ported and build first-class buildings, and have more stately services. I declare some of them are like great icebergs now and make you shiver even to pass them. They ought to warm the world instead of floating down from the Arctic regions of philosophy and dogma to chill human society. I can't help it—if all this is religion I don't want any of it. It was all well enough when I was up in the country, but in this great, struggling, seething mass of humanity, and in this whirlpool of injustices—in the same city with sweat-shops and tenements and strikes to get wages and to keep life, the Church ought to do something besides sing and pray. It would be better to dispense with the preaching and do a little practicing."

"Hearken," said Elsie, "I thought I heard a rap."

Then came that gentle tap, tap, tap, continuous and familiar. It was the noise peculiar, but always welcome.

"Come on, old fellow," shouted Henry.

In walked a stalwart young man of bright eye and smiling countenance, quick step and vivacity in every move, almost to the point of nervousness. It was Richard Harding, Henry's companion, and had been for several years. He sat down and then presently moved to another chair, and almost at the same instant arose and picked up a glass from the table and drank the remaining water in it, as he said: "That

was a lively conversation in which you were engaged when I was coming up the stairs, and Henry seemed to be doing the most of it."

"Yes," said Henry. "I just shocked her as much as if a bolt of lightning had come right down through the roof and landed on the middle of the table. I don't know but that some of the dishes are broken."

"They are swept clean, anyway," said Richard; "perhaps that was the effect of the lightning."

"Anyway, it was not a quarrel, was it, sister?" said Henry.

"No," replied Elsie, "but I must confess to the shock, or rather a sensation, call it—a pleasing sensation."

"Well, what was it?" said Richard, "let me into the secret. You know I am one of the family."

"If you are one of the family," said Elsie, "then you will have to go, too."

"Go where?" said he.

"I will let Henry tell you," answered Elsie, with something of a merry twinkle in her eye.

Henry sat with his feet crossed and his head leaning on the back of his chair, gazing at the ceiling and again drumming with his fork on the table, apparently oblivious to all that was going on around him, but after a moment's silence, in which Elsie had changed glances with and winked to Richard, he rolled his

head over toward them, and said, "What was you saying?"

"Oh, nonsense," said Elsie, "you know, come now, out with it, and then we will all three go together."

"Well, Dick, I am going to church to-morrow morning."

"Ha, ha, ha," came from Richard's side of the room. "After all you have said about the Church, and you having no use for it any more—now going? I thought as much; your sister has been working her scheme, and, like all these women, they get just about what they want if you only give them time enough, and most always it doesn't take much time. Well, I don't wonder at her influence. I think I might be moved myself."

"Oh, no, it wasn't for her this time; it was my own decision and wish. I asked her to go with me. We will take you, too."

"Where are you going and what brought this into your mind. I don't believe it has gotten into your heart yet."

"Will you go?" said Henry.

"That depends," replied he, "explain yourself."

"Wouldn't you like to hear a preacher answer this question; 'Would Christ belong to a labor union?'"

"Oh, I see," said Richard, "it is the subject that interests you, not the church."

"I guess that's it," replied Henry. "Anyway the pastor of this large church up at the corner of North avenue and Thirteenth street has advertised that as his subject. He must be a pretty good fellow, and that church just a little different from most others. There must be some sympathy there and anxiety to solve the difficult problems of the present date. Do you care to go with us?"

"You know," said Richard, "I don't go to church, and in fact do not feel very guilty about it either, but wherever there is the slightest effort to give the great question of labor and its wrongs a hearing, I will be glad to go and listen with both ears. Yes, my whole heart, too."

"All right," said Elsie, "at ten o'clock I will be ready."

"Yes," said Henry, "at ten sharp the procession will start, and Elsie will be captain."

"Oh, no," said she, "this is your doing, and you are the leader. Richard and I will walk together and you will lead the way."

"Say, Henry, have you seen the paper to-night?"

"No, I have not, Elsie has taken all my time talking about the Church; what is in the paper?"

"Oh, just filled about the strike. It is in a greater mix-up than ever. The concessions that seem just about to be made are farther away than yesterday,

and the motormen and conductors are more determined than ever. The sad part of it is that they or their false friends have been destroying cars again, and even injuring some people in a car on the outskirts in the eastern part of the city. That is death to their cause, and ours, too. I kept saying to myself all the way up here, 'Oh, the folly and blindness of this method.' "

"That's so, I suppose," replied Henry, "but—well, I don't know what to say—I know this, they are overworked and under paid and ought to have their rights."

"Come out for a little walk to the barber shop, I will bring you back to your sister in a few minutes all cleaned up and in good religious shape for church in the morning."

Elsie laughed as they walked out, and called down the stairs: "Come back soon, Henry, I have something special for you when you get here."

They reached the street and had just turned toward the barber shop when Richard said: "Henry, what is that—see the crowd up the street, somebody must be injured."

They hastened toward the rapidly increasing number of men, women and children.

Henry pushed his way toward the centre, and his was not a push of curiosity, but of service. If there

was any suffering, he always wanted to relieve it. If there was anybody receiving injustice he was anxious to fight for him. His noble, unselfish soul was crying with him, "Let me help," and his lips and hands carried it out into the world. It was the force of that spirit that made the way.

Richard tried to follow in the wake of the great ship ahead, but the crowd closed in behind him.

As Henry came toward the centre of the dense throng, he kept inquiring: "What is the matter, what is the matter?" but received no satisfactory reply. No one seemed to know just what had taken place, but Henry Fielding's quick eye and brave heart were enough. He saw an old man with snow white beard and with features and clothing of refinement lying partially in the gutter. His hat had rolled into the middle of the street, and his face was not covered, but marked with blood. An ugly bruise was upon his forehead, where he had struck the stones. Instantly, Henry said: "Why don't you help him up, why not carry him into the drug store over on the corner, do something for him."

Most of the crowd moved back, but Henry placed his strong arm under the fallen man's head and shoulders, while two other men seized the lower part of his body and carried him into the drug store.

With the aid of a physician, the insensible old man came back to life. The doors had been locked and

the crowd kept out. Richard followed to the door and was waiting for the result and the story.

When the injured man recovered sufficiently, he said he could hardly tell what had happened; it all came so suddenly, and was the farthest from any thought of his. He was on his way to that very drug store with a prescription to be filled out, and had ridden in a downtown car. He was just alighting from the car, when three men approached him and asked him why he patronized a railroad run by scabs and owned by a bloodthirsty corporation. Before he could even reply one of them had struck him a blow which had felled him to the pavement. Then they instantly vanished in the darkness. He could not tell how they looked. It all happened so quickly, and, of course, did not know whether they were railroad men or what they were. "Oh," he said, "I remember, one of them asked me if I did not know that they had asked people not to ride on those cars, and had warned them repeatedly against it, but of course I did not have any chance to explain or declare my rights or apologize or anything."

Everybody was expressing their indignation against such a dastardly outrage, but Henry never said a word. He completed his errand of mercy to the last letter of every requirement, and then quietly, and even unseen, withdrew. At the door he found Richard waiting and anxious to hear the story.

Henry simply related the facts, but ventured no opinion, only to say: "I am for the laboring man and labor union, first, last and always. I believe in a strike when necessary—yes, this strike, but he is an enemy of his own cause who strikes his fellow."

CHAPTER II.

THE STARTLING SERMON.

The dawn of the next morning carried the prophecy of one of the brightest and most beautiful days. It was a perfect October day, when the whole earth seemed to be touched with the colors of another world and musical with the harmony of heaven. The birds were vieing with each other in their victorious efforts to reach the highest notes, and even the silent forces seemed to be giving motion to the waves of song and joy.

The trees of the city park and the proud one at the side of the street were clothed in the garments of autumnal glory, many colored and royal.

Twice during the night Elsie had awakened with the thought of the church service in the morning, and each time struggled against her delight to forget it and become sleepy again.

When at last it was daybreak and her eyes opened to the clear sky and joyful earth, she brought her hands together in the familiar style of her ecstacy, and said aloud, "Oh, I am so glad I prayed last night for just this, and my prayer has been answered; I

knew it would be and nothing would hinder our going."

Almost unconsciously she fell upon her knees and uttered the simplicity and sweetness of her pure gratitude.

In the other room, Henry had awakened too, but with far different thoughts and feelings. He could hardly realize that it was Sunday and that his plans for the day were at such variance with the several years of the past. He wondered whether he wanted to go after all. We are such prisoners of habit that sometimes when we have broken the iron bars, we do not know whether we want to escape or not. Man's kingliness and divinity is in his power of escape, and becoming a free slave of the better.

Elsie called out in her happy tone a "good-morning" and a "hurry up."

"All right," shouted he, "here goes for the promise and the sermon."

Their breakfast was soon ready and the preparation for church made.

Ten o'clock came, but Richard had not arrived. Elsie began to be restless and even nervous. She walked to the window, then into the other room, and said over and over again, almost in a prayer: "Oh, I wish he would come." She was so fearful that his not coming or something else might prevent Henry's going. He might say that they would be late, or he

did not wish to go without Richard, or a thousand other excuses which flashed through her mind, but he did not, and when no step was heard at five minutes past ten, Henry said: "Come on, Elsie, we will go down the stairs anyway, and possibly we will meet him there. If not, we will hurry on without him."

When they came to the street, he was not there, and they were just returning toward the corner when from the opposite direction Richard was seen coming, walking and running in a sort of friendly tangle, first one and then the other.

Henry acted the sharp-shooter and fired at him at long range:

"Where is your alarm clock?"

"Yes," said Elsie, "when you make an engagement to walk to church with a young lady, and especially under such circumstances, with a protector and leader and guide, you ought to be on time. I rather expected you to be so happy about it and so anxious that you would have been an hour ahead of time."

"Forgive me this once out of seventy times seven, and I will do better next time," said Richard. "Really, it was not my fault. Come on and I will explain."

"Oh, we don't want any explanation," replied Elsie. "Guilty, that's all, just guilty, and the penalty will come some time."

"No mercy?" asked he, as he walked up to her side and to his appointed place.

"Well," answered Elsie, "we will see how good you are, and if you go every Sunday and become so accustomed to it that you will never be late again."

"I guess we have time enough anyway," said Henry, "there will be room enough. The churches are not so crowded in these days that we need fear. The only question will be whether Dick and I know how to walk in and sit down and behave when we get there. Anyhow, I am going to lose my prejudice against the ministers and churches for this morning, and listen with an honest purpose. I have thought of that question a thousand times since I first saw it, and I wonder just how he is going to answer it. I think I can answer it, but I will wait until afterward."

"There are other things in church service besides the sermon," said Elsie, "everybody ought to worship God, and I hope that spirit will be in all of us. It is one of the commands, and it must be just as wicked not to keep that one as not to keep the others."

Neither one of her companions made any reply, but walked on in silence for half a square, when Henry said again: "If curiosity is sinful then I am a sinner, because I will have to confess most of this comes under that name.

The bulletin faced them at the corner again as it had Henry the morning previous. They all glanced at it, and hastened in, because the sound of the organ was heard, and the service had already begun.

At the door a friendly hand greeted them and passed them on to another man of genial manner and a smile of welcome. He ushered them to a seat in the best place that was vacant, and it was not so formal and cold and funereal and unattractive as imagination had pictured it. There was life in the music, light in the building, sympathy in the prayer, earnestness and enthusiasm in the spirit.

David Dowling was not an Apollo in appearance. He was neither striking in figure nor movement. Yet there was something about him that marked him as a man. He was just in the prime of life, with a quick, vivacious movement, a commanding attitude, and vigorous speech. Five years ago he had parted his hair on the left side; two years ago it was parted on the right side, and now it was departed. His intellectual quality was strikingly manifest, and yet it was not of the Arctic type. He lived in the temperate zone, and almost near the unseen line of the torrid. He had a great heart and knew the definition of sympathy. His pulpit seemed to change into a throne, and the king was in his place.

Henry and Richard both fastened their eyes upon him, and it was a look of increasing admiration. Especially was this true when he arose and announced his text and his subject, and declared his emphatic and deathless determination to help the workingman and bring him and his Christ into their right relation

to each other. He said: "I have been criticised severely for asking this question: 'Would Christ belong to a labor union?' Some have said it was sensational. I am glad it is. Sensation is life. It has in it the life of to-day. Shame, thrice shame, upon a dead church and a dead preacher and a dead religion. If the Church does not touch the life of the people, build it in the cemetery and call it sepulchre. If the gospel has any meaning, it comes with tremendous force into every part of human life. Christ Himself created the greatest sensation by the subjects which He treated and the methods which He adopted. He is an enemy of the Church who whines and whimpers over sensation. He is preparing himself for death and judgment both. Some others have said it was bringing Christ down to ask this question concerning Him. He brought Himself down to the carpenter shop to save the workingman. God forbid that we should take Him out of His chosen place. The God of the heathen is not my God. He whom I worship and adore and am ready to die for is Jesus of Bethlehem and Nazareth and Calvary. He condescended to the level of every man's life and work. If He was on earth to-day He would have something to say concerning the labor unions and something to do with them. That is a part of His mission, and the Church has been traitorous to the trust He has placed in it."

Then, with a long and effective pause, he said in the almost oppressive silence of the audience: "Is not this the carpenter? Jesus Christ is the best friend the workingman ever had."

"Did not He stand by the bench? Was not every nerve and muscle in His human body weary with the hardest toil? Did He not wish some days that it was six o'clock when it was only three?

"How could it be possible that He would not have the deepest sympathy for the man in the same place? Would He not belong to any organization for the elevation of mankind? Anything that is good has the co-operation of the Son of God.

"Would He belong to a labor union to-day? Let any man who says not stand up and prove his case. I declare unhesitatingly that every principle, every interest, every act of the life He lived, every line of the Book He inspired, is on the side of toiling men.

"The Church which bears His name and the preacher who follows His example to-day must be in sympathy with every righteous effort on the part of organized labor.

"True Christianity must ever be in closest sympathy with the working classes. It is true that some members of the Church may oppress the workingman and have little regard for the needs of the poor, but that is not the spirit of the Gospel, nor what I believe represents the real heart of the Church.

"All members of the labor union are not true friends of the poor, however. It is conceivable that a walking delegate or an official may be friendly to the laborer in order to get and hold an easy position, and not be true to his profession. It is not just to condemn a thousand men because of the falsity of one.

"Christ taught and the Church still works toward the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. He drove that great truth into human society with every stroke of His hammer in the shop of Nazareth.

"It is an unadulterated mistake on the part of the working man to suppose that the Church has lost this spirit. Most churches are on his side, and have a royal welcome for the calloused hand that knocks at their doors.

"There are hundreds of churches in the cities which are now half empty, and would do anything legitimate to bring every member of the labor unions within their doors.

"I verily believe that the same spirit is in the preacher, and he is giving sacrificial blood to save the very men who will not come to hear him. The Church is not far away from Christ, nor is it far away from the labor union, as wicked and unjust enemies are constantly declaring.

"Apart from the Gospel the labor union would never have existed It was born in the principles of

Christianity and rocked in the cradle of the Church. There are no labor unions in the jungle of Africa. There is no Christianity there.

"Christ was the author of brotherhood. He uttered the sublimity of life, 'Do unto others as you would that others do unto you.' He taught 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'

"The Sermon on the Mount ought to be the union's creed. He gave the only possible and practical solution of the labor problem.

"There is a labor question. There always has been. It existed when Christ was on the earth, only under a different form. At heart, it was the same. It may be more exaggerated now. The great labor movement is of modern times; revolts were local in the past, and neither so widespread or continuous as to-day. What is the purpose of this great movement now? It is simply to procure for the laboring man a fuller and more just proportion of the things which toil produces. Wealth has been marvelously increased by inventive genius, and the control of natural forces and riches. All men have shared in these advantages. The poorest man has that now which the richest could not have one hundred years ago, but there has not been justice in this division. The concentration of wealth has also impaired the interest of the workingman. This present day movement on the part of

labor seeks to level wages, shorten hours, to make men less like machines, to break the shackles of slaves, to improve the sanitary conditions of the factory and place of toil, to remove danger and disease from their environment. It seeks to protect women and children and maintain the right to organize. This organized effort has had a marked and unquestioned effect in bringing wages at a point of possible and even comfortable living. All this makes the labor question a burning issue at the very heart of society. A glance at the unorganized trade will reveal the difference. The man who has no protection from an organization is at the mercy of an employer who may be a tyrant in spirit, and selfish to the last degree. A man is justified in securing the men to perform his work as cheaply as possible, but it is the business also of the workingmen to get as much as possible for their work. The labor organization may be wrongly guided sometimes, but this is not an argument against its necessity or benefit either. In the whole circle of the years and effort, the result has been beneficial, and not only for the laborer but for society also. You improve the condition of the workingmen by wages, hours and opportunity, and you give greatest blessing to the community in which they live and work.

"There is a labor question—a burning question at the very heart of society. It is traitorous to deny it.

The Gospel of the Carpenter of Nazareth for the labor union of which He would be a member is:

"Justice for the worker.

"Liberty for society.

"Salvation for the man.

"Justice is the supreme word in all demands of the labor unions. They have been misunderstood and misrepresented. A labor union has been supposed to be another word for organized anarchy and socialism and nihilism.

"Labor unions believe in law. One of their most righteous efforts has been to secure right legislation. That is one of their first objects.

"They do not ask for sympathy. No kingly man takes the attitude of a creeping beggar. They are not crying at the door of society for sympathy. Nor are they organized efforts to secure charity.

"Labor unions do not ask for the rich man's money or any other man's money, but make just demands for the workingman's money. They say: 'Give us justice in the hours of work and the remuneration for service and the respect which every honest man deserves. We are not cattle, nor are we machines. We are men.'

"And they have knocked at the doors of legislative halls and demanded laws to control factories and mines and every place where men are compelled to

work, so that life shall not be imperilled nor health sacrificed.

"Wonderful laws have they wrought out in this respect. It was only a few years ago that all the laws were made by employers, and no one can question their partiality. Now the labor unions, by virtue of their organized force, have been and are able to claim attention and respect and representation.

"I congratulate them upon their attainment, and also upon the day in which they are living. The workingman was never so well off in the history of the world as he is to-day.

"He has better wages, better hours, better homes, better opportunities, better everything. No thoughtful, honest man who has been a student of history can question that statement. Nevertheless much remains to be done in his interest, and I bid him godspeed in the securing of complete justice.

"Justice is the word—do you hear me? Mistake it not. Define it. Understand it. Believe it. Live it.

"It has the greatest circumference of any word in your vocabulary.

" 'Give each man his just share,' is the battle cry of the labor union. And they ought to shout it and fight it until the last enemy of labor lies dead on the battlefield, and the last victory for right is won.

"The Christian employer will always meet them on

their level, explain the condition of his business and ask their judgment concerning their just proportion. And it has always resulted in the same blessing of harmony and mutual love and respect. This is not a dream nor even an ideal.

"It is a magnificent reality.

"There is a gentleman in America who employs one thousand hands. He was asked some time ago when there was great trouble in the labor market:

"'How are you getting on with your men?'

"'Oh,' he said, 'I have no trouble.'

"'Why,' he was asked, 'have you not had any strikes?'

"'No,' he said, 'in all these years I have not had even the shadow of trouble with my men.'

"The cry at the heart of every good labor organization is not a selfish, grasping, greedy yelp. It is the soul's cry for simple justice.

"The employer must learn to recognize it, and see in every man some remnant of the image and likeness of God which commands his respect, or there can be and there will be no peace.

"But there is another element which is closely allied to this, if not bound to it by the bonds of a holy wedlock, that is, liberty for employer and employee, member of corporation and member of labor unions, and every man, woman and child in the society where unions and corporations exist.

"One of the perils of the day in which we are living is that that priceless treasure for which our ancestors fought and died shall be taken away from us, even in the times which are called peaceful.

"That which we fought to give the black man, in Heaven's name, do not allow to be snatched away from our grasp. Patrick Henry's cry might be uttered to-day with just as much pathos and necessity in it as the day when it echoed along these Eastern shores of a new world and re-echoed through the corridors of heaven: 'Give me liberty or give me death!'

"You are free men. This is the snap of the slave lash again. If a man wants to belong to a labor organization let him belong. If he does not let him stay out. As you value your life keep your liberty to say 'no.' You are king yourself. Let no man put a manacle upon your hand or foot or head or heart.

"Society also has interests, and sacred ones, which must be taken into account. The old blunder of preferring force to moral agency is the secret of failure. Men have the right not to work, but have no right to prevent other men from taking their places.

"The public will not tolerate this barbarous method. Under no conditions will they allow the liberties of those who desire to work to be destroyed. Neither will they allow the perpetration of outrages upon their own rights.

"This is not the day when the obstinacy of a railroad president or the dissatisfaction of a few hundred workmen can hurl injustice and inconvenience and risk of life into the centre of millions of people.

"Every question which concerns the world of labor is of vital interest to Christ and the Church and society. Christ came to save the individual man and everything of value to his life. He came to save him for time as well as eternity. Anything which helps in this great work of mankind and the redemption of the world would have His assistance and blessing. He would say again upon earth and whisper it in the soul of every man: 'Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give ye rest.'"

As he finished, Henry anxiously settled back in his seat. He had been holding himself slightly forward, and did not know it. He looked down at the back of the seat in front of him, and Elsie could not help but look toward him and wonder.

She breathed a silent prayer that he might be pleased with the sermon, and that something might come into his life that very moment to change it.

He sat like a statue until they arose for the benediction.

When they reached the street, each one waited for the other to break the silence.

Elsie could hardly hold back the query: "How

did you like it?" But this was a peculiar occasion, and she must wait.

At last Richard said:

"Well, Henry, what did you think of that?"

"I am glad I went," replied Henry.

"That is not enough," said Richard. "How did you like the answer to your question?"

"If I must be honest," said Henry, "it was a revelation to me. The Church may not be as far away from us and our interest as we think it is. One preacher, anyway, is fair and courageous and sympathetic. I believe that if the workingmen could hear that kind of truth, the most of them would be in the Church very soon. He did not go as far as I wish he had, but it was a pretty long step."

Elsie's heart almost beat its way through the wall of its prison.

Richard walked on, waiting for some one to ask him what he thought, but no one seemed very anxious to know, so at last he ventured to say:

"He has a great deal of magnetism and oratory in him, hasn't he? You cannot help but listen."

"Yes," said Elsie, "I don't believe it was all in the subject."

"That was not my special interest, but I would like to hear him every Sunday."

"Yes," said Henry; "he was so honest and earnest that everybody would be drawn toward him. I con-

fess that I had lost some of my prejudice before he had begun his sermon."

"Will you go again?" asked Elsie.

"I will not make any more promises now," said Henry, "but Dick and I may get the same notion again some day. Give this time to digest."

Richard said: "There is unquestionably a vast amount of misrepresentation of the Church and misunderstanding concerning it, and yet most of them are as indifferent as the stones in their walls to the wrongs of society and the needs of man. Why don't they all discuss these burning questions, and in the name of the Gospel they preach bring in the liberty and justice and salvation of which he spoke this morning?"

"Yes," said Henry, "this is the opportunity of the Church. The working men are not so far away from its doors, if the Church people and preachers will only bridge the little chasm. Sympathy, interest, fearlessness, truth are the stones and steel for that bridge."

"Here we are already," said Elsie, "but you will both have to go again with me."

"You don't need to urge me very hard," said Richard, as he extended his hand to her and said, "Good-by."

CHAPTER III.

A RICH GIRL'S SACRIFICE.

As soon as her work was finished that afternoon Elsie hastily made preparation to go out.

Henry did not ask any questions, because he knew where she was going.

It was often a part of her Sunday to attend the service at the mission in Ninth street.

She was deeply interested in the work they were doing, but had gone more as a listener than a helper. helper.

She wished to-day that she dared ask Henry to go with her, but thought better not to go too far in one day.

That is often the mistake of heart desire and anxiety.

Zeal needs the bridle of tact, and love is better in the companionship of wisdom.

In her delight over the morning's experience she almost stepped upon the jewel and crushed it.

An unseen angel clasped her hand and led her the right way.

It was a quick farewell and a look of affection, and she was gone.

Henry called after her:

"If I am not here when you come back, I will be safe. I expect Richard, and we will be out somewhere this fine day."

After a musical "all right" had sounded back, Henry said to himself and almost aloud:

"What a sweet, simple, sincere girl she is. I am glad I had her come and give me the chance to sacrifice for her. She has her own temptations and burdens, but knows how to meet them and carry them. Her Christianity is real. It means something in her life."

He arose, and, with hands behind his head, gave a Sunday afternoon yawn, and said:

"If there is no other proof on earth, here is one bit of logic that stands the test. Yes, if it is good for her, perhaps it is all my own fault that it has lost its power over me. The sun cannot make a garden in a cellar."

How unconscious she was of this irresistible influence over her brother, but that is the method of influence and the way of real Christian character everywhere.

Elsie had reached the mission and taken her usual place near the door, waiting to be of any service in teaching a class or as a listener in the Bible class, when, to her astonishment, who should walk past her and up toward the front of the small room but the Rev. David Dowling.

She wondered what brought him there, what relation he had with the work, and a whole chain of questions.

She had been there several times, but never saw him before.

He walked to the platform, and sat down in a vacant chair by the side of the superintendent.

She noticed how he smiled to this one and nodded to another near him, and also, as he passed through the room, how he touched with his hand of love a little curly headed boy, and thus created another smile in the world.

The recognition was instant, and a child's heart enlarged to welcome new joy.

Elsie thought "he is just like his sermon; he is a practicing preacher. If Henry could only meet him and know him."

She whispered to some one who sat near her, and asked if Mr. Dowling came there very often.

"Oh, yes," was the reply. "You know this is a mission of his church."

Elsie gave a look of surprise and a nod of thanks.

She almost forgot to give her attention to what was going on about her, so absorbed was she with her own thoughts.

"Isn't this strange; what a peculiar coincidence, though I am just as glad as I can be. I want to meet him, and perhaps this is the opportunity."

Just then some one approached her, and asked if she would not teach a class of boys only for this afternoon.

It was but a momentary hesitation on her part when the consent was given.

She sat down right in the centre of the unattractive group and tried to win their attention and their hearts.

She could win almost anybody, but an angel direct from heaven and commissioned to secure the attention and affection of a class of boys in a mission school might have to go back and report failure.

It was a tension upon her nerves, and a strain upon her patience.

She never had such a time as this afternoon. She had tried it before, and with some measure of success.

There was one boy with unwashed hands and even some remnants of last week upon his face. His hair was uncombed and uncut. His clothing was not ragged, but might have been even that with improvement. He seemed to be just possessed with an evil desire, and almost determination. He would not listen, nor would he sit still; more than that, he and one or two others were pinching and pushing the ones next to them, and even went so far as to make paper balls out of their lesson leaflets and throw them across the room.

In her heart she kept saying, "What shall I do?" and she might as well have said it in audible language, for they knew what she was saying, and only increased her trouble.

She was wishing and almost praying that no one would see her and the class, and that the bell would soon ring for the lesson to close, but the minutes were so long, and still she talked on.

She tried to tell them stories outside of the day's lesson to interest and attract attention, but without avail.

Some one was a witness of her task and the tax upon her courage. Mr. Dowling stood at her side:

"I want to meet you and know you. I don't think I have seen you here before, but I am so glad that you are in this noble service."

She told him she had been there before, but not a regular attendant. She added that she had been anxious to meet him.

"Before the school is over," said he, "I want your name and address, and now I would like to see one of your boys for a moment."

While he was saying it he took the very one by the hand who had been the cause of most of the trouble, and led him to a side seat and sat down by him, placed his arm around him and began whispering to him.

Elsie could not hear what he was saying, but she knew.

He was making it easier for her or somebody else the next time.

What a holy mission that is on earth, preparing the way for Christ or one of Christ's followers.

The superintendent had done a different work that afternoon.

He had taken two of the scholars in another class right out of their chairs and pushed them through the doorway, as he said:

"When you can behave come back, and not before."

Perhaps both ways were right and accomplished the object, but the first method seemed the most like Christ, and to have the greatest saving force in it. It was harder, but that is a part of Calvary.

Just at the close of the school the superintendent said:

"We are always glad to hear from our pastor, and I wonder if he has not something to say to-day."

There was silence as he arose, as there always was. He said:

"I was reading this last week of a beautiful Christian young lady who wanted to teach in Sunday school, and there was no class for her. The leader told her to bring her own class, and he would find a place for them. That week she found a ragged boy

on the street, asked him to come to her home, told him she would give him some new clothing if he would go to Sunday school with her the following Sunday. He promised her he would.

"The first Sunday he was the only scholar; the next Sunday he was the only scholar, and the third Sunday he was not there at all.

"She did not give him up, but found him, and found the clothes were being used for every day, and almost worn out already.

"She tried him three times with clothes, and her heart's best love, but he seemed to be bad, and only bad, and her work a failure. She told the superintendent so, and said she must give him up. 'There was not anything in him; he was deceitful and mean, and they better let him go.'

"'No,' said he, 'try him once more.'

"She did, and in the very spirit of Christ stayed by her task. An angel could do no more.

"That boy," said Mr. Dowling, "was Dr. Robert Morrison, the first and great missionary to China. Mighty on earth and mighty in heaven! How do you teachers know what you have been doing to-day?"

Elsie knew he meant her, and thought:

"I will try it again if they want me to, and the very same class, too."

As soon as the school was dismissed, Mr. Dowling was at her side, and asked for her name and address.

He was waiting to write it, but she had already written it upon a slip of paper and handed it to him.

"Where is your church home?" he said.

"Well," she replied, "I hardly know what to say. I have not been in the city very long, and have not brought my letter to any church yet. I have been to several different churches, but was to yours this morning, and liked it very much."

"I suppose you came there because of your being to the mission before?"

She hastened to reply, but he interrupted her by asking:

"Where is your old home?"

"In Vermont," she answered.

"What part of it?"

She told him, and a look of surprise and mingled delight passed over his face as he said:

"Why, I was brought up near there myself. Of course, I have not lived there for many years, still everything about that part of the country is familiar to me. That makes me more interested in you. Now, I cannot talk to-day, but I am coming to call on you when you are home. Yes, if you want me to, I will come this week. Let me see. I can call for a few moments to-morrow evening."

"You will be welcome," said Elsie.

She wondered, and even partially sighed, as she thought:

"We have so little, and in such a small place, I am almost ashamed to have him come."

He walked away, came back in a moment, and said:

"Before I go I want to introduce you to one of our noblest young ladies, and one of the best workers in my church, also in the mission here, and everywhere in the city. She is a very rich girl, the daughter of one of the greatest manufacturers in the country, but she sacrifices everything for Christ and the good of others. I am sure you will be glad to know her."

He turned, and motioned to a young woman near by to come that way. As she approached, Elsie saw an expression of character the like of which she had rarely, if ever, seen.

Her features seemed to be the marks of Christ. She was graceful in form and move. She carried a certain charm which changed an introduction into a long acquaintance.

It takes fifty years of introduction for some people. It takes fifty seconds for others.

Familiarity and companionship always cost much if they are valuable, but it comes more quickly in some instances than in others.

Elsie's first thought was: "What a chasm between my condition and hers," but condition is not character, and the bridge was speedily swung across.

Mr. Dowling hastened away after the mere mention of their names to each other.

Grace Chalmers and Elsie Fielding had little in common except their devotion to Christ and a worthy ideal for life.

Elsie could compete with her in that respect.

Character is the queen's throne, an ideal is the golden sceptre in her hand.

Movement toward a high ideal is the act almost of divinity, even if the most of time is passed in the narrow circle of two small rooms. Moving away from the ideal is at once the tragedy and pathos of life.

They paused a moment in conversation and entered into sympathy with each other concerning the hard problem of a class of boys, for Miss Chalmers had experienced just about the same trouble as Elsie had.

As they moved toward the door, she said to Miss Fielding:

"Which way do you go?"

Elsie told her with some shadow of hesitancy. She was not proud, but she was human.

"I am going that way myself," said she. "At least, a part of the way, and you will have to let me go with you."

As they walked on, she said:

"I think I saw you in church this morning. You sat right behind us, and as I turned around after the service I caught sight of you, and I think there was a young gentleman with you."

"Yes," replied Elsie, "there were two of them. My brother and a friend of his. I remember you, too, but, of course, never thought of meeting you again, and, in fact, I was a stranger to everybody there. That was the first time, and I did not know until to-day that the mission belonged to that church."

"How did you like the church?"

"Oh, very much," replied Elsie. "I couldn't tell much about the building and the music, because it was the sermon that especially interested us. My brother was very anxious to have that question answered."

"Well," said Miss Chalmers, "we were all interested in it, and I think this sermon was good and the subject ought to be talked about, but my father, while he does not say much, I know feels that the pulpit better leave such questions alone. Of course, he is a little out of sympathy with some of the views brought out this morning. He is a manufacturer, and that is a standpoint he declares different from the pulpit. He says the ministers do not understand the situation and the difficulties. They are in danger

of allowing their sympathies to run away with their judgment. If they had a few strikes on their hands, they might be able to preach upon the labor question. He said when we reached home this noon that when he went to church he wanted to hear the Gospel and not any discussion of the labor unions, but I am glad that Mr. Dowling has the courage to face the employers and speak the truth to them as well as everybody else. He does not hesitate or stop for anybody. All get treated alike with him, and he says if the Gospel means anything it means the solution of the labor question, and all other questions, and he is commissioned of Heaven to bring the principles of Christianity to bear upon every part of human society. He is a noble man, and does not bend his principle for anybody or anything. It hurts sometimes, but he says: 'The truth Jesus uttered had the same effect.'"

Just then Elsie could not have been more astonished had an earthquake shaken the stones beneath her feet. They were at the corner, and from the other street came Henry and Richard, as if it had been timed by the watch.

They came face to face with them.

Elsie recovered instantly from her surprise, and said:

"Well, I didn't expect to meet you, but I am glad I did, because I want to make Miss Chalmers ac-

quainted with my brother and his friend, Mr. Harding."

There was a look in Henry Fielding's eye which only he who is skilled in reading character and understanding the vast meaning in a glance or single expression could understand, or would even notice. Some new element of life had suddenly appeared and crossed his pathway. Was it an angel?

After a moment's conversation Grace said she had been delighted to meet them, but must hasten homeward, as this was her corner.

She disappeared in the direction of Flower avenue, where her home stood among those of the rich.

"Well," said Henry, "where did you find her?"

"Oh, I have had the strangest experiences this afternoon; but first tell me if you do not think she has a beautiful way."

"Yes, and even a beautiful face."

"Yes," replied Richard, "but you didn't give us time enough to take in the situation or the beauty, either."

"That's right," said Henry, "before I recovered from being startled and stunned, she was gone. Who is she, anyway?"

"She is one of the richest girls in the city," said Elsie, with a faint desire to tease and increase curiosity.

"What nonsense," said Henry. "You will have to

tell us where you met her, and all about her, before we believe such a story as that; what can you have to do with one of the richest girls in the city? We must have gone to the planet of Mars if we have been introduced to a rich girl. That is not our society on the earth."

"Oh," said Elsie, "I do not believe the rich and the poor are so far apart as it is pictured sometimes. Character and education and ambition—yes, real Christianity, are bringing them nearer together. It is just as true as I said it. That is Grace Chalmers; she is rich, and her father is a great manufacturer. They sat right in front of you in church this morning, and—and——'

"Hold on, hold on," said both voices at the same time, "that is enough, give us the explanation. The facts seem like ghosts; put the clothes of reality upon them," continued Henry.

"Who else do you think I met this afternoon?" was the only answer Elsie made.

"Never mind," said Henry, "tell us about the first case first."

They had now reached the door, and Henry said:

"Come up, Dick; you will have to hear the rest of this strange story."

"The rest of it," said he. "I have not heard any of it yet, but here goes for the end of the chapter."

When they reached the rooms, they both declared that Elsie had delayed and tantalized enough.

"Now out with the whole thing," said Henry.

"Yes, not take off hat or anything else; sit right there," said he, and make this startling revelation."

Then she told him of her amazement at seeing David Dowling come into the mission, of his pleasing manner, of the light and joy he seemed to carry. She related her trouble with the class and his errand of love and kindness to her, and the unmanageable boy, also the story he told the school, and how she knew it was all for her sake.

Then came the most interesting part of it, and not a word had been said by her listeners up to that point, and neither ventured a question now, only with their eyes.

They looked toward each other with an expression of wonder if it was all so, and yet if Elsie told it, they knew it must be true to the letter.

Then she went back in her story to tell how he had asked her name and address, and after the service she had to give it to him; also of his saying that he was coming to call.

Now a bright smile played on Richard's face, and he said:

"Henry, that is for you. You will meet the parson now, and be good again."

"Nonsense," replied Henry. "I have been once,

but have not promised to go again, and I do promise to be away if I know when he is coming to see Elsie. But how about this rich girl?"

"He called her over to where I was standing and introduced her to me, and left us to talk a moment, and then to walk home together."

"How do you know about her father and her money, and the seat in the church, and all that?"

"He told me a part of it, and she told me the rest. Of course, Mr. Dowling gave me the information about her wealth, and he also said she had the greatest riches of character; that she was one of the noblest young women in the city, so pure in heart and unselfish in life. She was interested in every good work, and loved to help the poor and work for them in the mission and everywhere."

"She must be an exception," said Henry. "I don't believe she moves in a large circle of her kind. That class of people are few in this city. Most of those with money are just living for themselves. What do they care for the suffering and sorrowing and starving poor? They are as far away from them as if they lived in China."

"You must remember," said Elsie, "that China is not very far away, and all people in this world come closer to each other than they think. You may be right, and yet partially wrong, Henry. There is not such a great gulf between the working people and

those with money. It is possible to cross from one side to the other, anyway, and some of the rich people are doing more than anybody knows, except God. I was reading in the paper only yesterday of a poor woman who attempted suicide by jumping from the pier. She held her starving child to her bosom. They rescued her, more dead than alive, and carried her to the hospital. In the night she died, and that next afternoon one of the richest ladies in the city, the wife of one of the largest business men in America, came with her carriage to get the orphan and crippled child, and care for it as her own. Was not that Christ-like? Even Jesus could not do better with money than that, and that is only one of thousands of like cases, I believe."

"That is good to say, and rather sweet to think," said Henry; but, Elsie, you don't see and know what I do. That is only a drop in the great ocean of want and wrong."

"I cannot help it," replied she, "I still believe there is a great deal of good in this world, and some unselfishness among the well-to-do class."

"Some is a good word, sister," said Henry; "but what more do you know about Miss Chalmers?"

"Ah," said Richard, "that question is a window. The light is in Henry's heart now. That shows where his interest is. I thought he would not care whether there was any woman in the world besides

his sister and mother, and now he is suddenly changed. What will not an hour do?"

"More than run the minute hand around the face of a clock," answered Henry.

"How strangely circumstances change and things work out in this world," said Elsie. "Wasn't it a peculiar thing that I should meet these very people whom we saw and heard this morning, and I not know that the mission had anything to do with the church to which Henry was taking us? Anyway, I am just delighted, and I am going to that church all the time now, and do more in the mission, too, than I have done. This has been a new day in my life."

"It seems like one in mine, too," said Henry.

"I belong to the family, Elsie says, and it must be in mine, too," said Richard.

"Was her father at church this morning, I wonder," said Henry. "He probably does not go to church, or the preacher would not ask that question in his sermon, and answer it as he did."

"Yes, he was there," said Elsie; "his daughter told me so."

"Well, I think more of that minister than I did before. I supposed he was like all the rest of them, afraid to speak the truth unless it pleased the people who paid his salary."

"I do not think you need look at Mr. Dowling more than once," said Elsie, "to know that he has

the courage of his convictions and would speak any time and any place what he believed God told him to say."

"I believe that, too," said Richard. "I like to agree with your sister, Henry, on general principles, but in this she is certainly right. I believe the man who preached that sermon this morning is both honest and heroic. Your world and mine is changed somewhat by it, and if that kind of sermons were preached in every pulpit, with backbone and heart and blood in them as well as brain, the churches would be crowded and society would be saved. The enmity between classes and the fighting between employers and employees would cease. Men who do not go to church are not necessarily totally bad and destitute of all conscience and religion. They want to have the truth given application to the burning questions of the day. Don't you think, Henry, that most men in our factory have respect for Christianity and a belief in it, and even respect for the Church; but they don't believe in the present cold and impractical methods of pulpit platitudes."

"Yes," said Henry, "David Dowling is on the right track, and we will go again."

CHAPTER IV.

A STORMY NIGHT IN UNION NO. 10.

"You will have to make haste with me to-night, Elsie," was the way Henry greeted his sister the following evening, as he rushed in from work, and at once began hurried proceedings to get ready to go out again.

"What makes you in such a rush to-night?" she asked. "Is there something unusual at your meeting?"

"Yes," he replied, "we expect a stormy night over the treatment of the street car men who are out on a strike, and besides, we are threatened with a lock-out ourselves."

"Well, you need not go on such a run through the house, and through your supper. You will have ample time."

"No, I have not," he answered; "there are some things which I want to arrange before the hour, and I am on a committee which meets a half hour previous to the regular meeting."

"Oh, Henry, I believe you, and always believe you," with a bright flash in her eye, and a smile darting across her face, "but I just happened to think of

something, and I know you have thought of it, and that is the secret of your hurry to-night. The other may be in it, but this is in it, too. Come on, the table is all ready, and I will do my part to make no mistake in the schedule time. If the train is late, it will not be my fault."

"What do you mean by your conundrum?" queried Henry.

"Oh, you know."

"No, I don't; and that answer is neither a black one nor a white one."

"Just think a moment while you are loosening your collar button."

"Do you mean the preacher's coming here?" asked he.

She laughed, and said:

"That is the old way of crawling out. Asking a question, and in the interrogation mark is the whole story. You are just trying to get out before he comes."

She did not say it, but could not help wishing something would break, or Mr. Dowling would come earlier, or almost anything so that he would meet Henry before he went.

"You are not blind, Elsie. To tell the truth, I am quite willing to be down the stairs and about a block away when he gets here. I have not anything against him, but a great deal now in his favor. Yet

a minister is not just my kind, and I would as soon be necessarily absent. You are a church girl, and can talk all evening with him. I have not anything in common, you know, and you can give my regrets. I don't know just what I mean by that, but you give it just the same."

Henry followed to the letter the prescription for dyspepsia, and swallowed his food without injury to its form or feelings, and quickly finished his dress by throwing on his coat and hat at the same time.

He started to the door, and was saying good-night to Elsie, when there was a footstep in the hall, and a careful rap at the door.

Elsie understood that strange and expressive look upon Henry's face—almost a startled appearance.

She said: "Open the door."

As he did, a ringing voice, laden with joy, said:

"Good-evening, Mr. Fielding; I have not met you, but I know you. Anybody could tell that you were the brother whom your sister told me about."

Henry was embarrassed for a moment, but quickly recovered to say:

"Come in; you are very welcome; of course, I know who you are, too. I have seen you before."

Elsie immediately arose to greet him, and offer him their best chair.

"You will have to excuse me for coming so early, because when I promised you to call I forgot that I

had another engagement for the evening which I could not break, and so came here for a moment on my way."

Henry was waiting, and almost holding his breath to get the first opportunity to say: "You will have to accept my apology for going, because I was on my way to the door just as you came."

At last he said it, and added: "I suppose that does not make any difference, because you came to see my sister, anyway, and not me."

"Oh, no," said Mr. Dowling, emphatically. "I know about you, and rather think it was as much for you, if not more."

He was quick to read character and look through the surface of circumstances. He knew what would please Elsie best, and at the same time be at least a silk thread around Henry, whom he was already anxious to take as a prisoner for Christ.

No one knew how his heart went out to save men, especially young men away from home and away from God.

Whenever he saw a noble-looking fellow like Henry outside of the Church, and a good, honest purpose in his soul, he said: "It seemed as if Calvary was upon him."

The people who only heard him preach did not get into the secret of his life. Sometimes even his methods and subjects of sermons and utterances were

misunderstood and criticised, and even condemned, yet through everything he did and said there ran the one purpose—to help fulfill the holy mission of his Saviour.

He could begin a sermon almost anywhere, but he never failed to end it at the Cross.

The moment he saw Henry Fielding he detected a man for whom Christ died, and worthy of his best efforts. Henry's apparent anxiety to go only made him more anxious to reach him in some way, and he felt that it was not to be a task marked impossible.

It is this spirit in a consecrated man's soul which is always victorious.

When Henry closed the door he could not refrain from saying:

"I heard your sermon yesterday, and I am coming again."

"I thank you," said Mr. Dowling; "I shall look for you."

He turned toward Elsie and remarked:

"You evidently have a noble young man for your brother. He carries the marks and bears inspection."

"Yes," said Elsie, "there is only one thing lacking; if he would only become a Christian and a member of the Church, I would think he was perfect."

"I imagined he was not much of a Church fellow, but we will bring him."

"I would be so happy if that could be," replied she; "I would give up anything in the world if it would only come true. I cannot tell you how happy I was. I think I was the nearest to heaven I have ever been last Sunday morning when he went to church with me, and it was all his own suggestion. I know God has answered my prayer. I have asked Him a thousand times to do this, and He has worked out everything so strangely and yet so beautifully."

"Tell me about it," said Mr. Dowling.

Then Elsie related to him the story of the church bulletin, the labor union, Richard Harding, the service and their pleasure in the sermon. "Now, this is the strangest part of it. I know some people would say, 'Oh, it was just chance,' but I know God answers prayer. Why should I go to the mission yesterday afternoon? I had only been occasionally, but I seemed impressed with a certain resistless necessity that I must go. I had to hasten more than ever, and I was late at that, but I went. Then, to my astonishment, I saw you there for the first time, met other friends who had seen us in the morning, even to be interested and friendly enough to walk home with me, and, strangest of all, to meet my brother and his friend Richard on the corner of the

street where Miss Chambers and I were to separate. Now he has met you."

"Well," interrupted Mr. Dowling, "that is a chain which only a higher power could forge. The eyes of the world do not discover the working and are blind to the intricate methods of His answer, but the intricacy does not destroy the validity."

"That is just what I believe," said Elsie. "I know my prayer has been answered, and I am sure the end is not yet."

"Just what is the reason for his not going to church?" asked Mr. Dowling.

"I do not believe he has a good one," answered Elsie, "but he thinks he has. I fear he misunderstands the Church and its real work in the world. He thinks you ministers have no sympathy with the workingmen, and the churches are just for the rich and well-to-do. I fear he has gotten to be almost a socialist, or something like that. I do not believe he is an infidel. I know he believes in God. Yes, I know he believes in Christ. But, then, he says there is little of the real spirit of Christ in the Church. He does not believe it is very anxious, if desirous at all, to have him and his class. He witnesses so much injustice in society and so many wrongs placed upon the laboring men that he says his work is in the labor union, and he can make the best fight for the right there. He is one of their

best workers and most enthusiastic supporters. He is on committees, and has held office, and even makes speeches sometimes. Yes, he has advocated strikes, and been a participant in them. The one now going on is taking all his interest. It is in all this, Mr. Dowling, he thinks the Church stands off on one side, and is deaf to the cry of real need and speechless before the deepest necessities and darkest sins in human society."

David Dowling had been looking right at Elsie when she began to tell him this story, but before she was half-way through his eyes were upon the floor at his feet, and his mind and heart were following every word that she uttered. At her first real pause he shook his head and said:

"I am afraid he is not the only one."

"No," said Elsie, "his friends, and in fact, all his associates, feel just the same. He says there are one hundred and fifty men in his place of business, and only three of them go to church."

"There must be some reason for all this. I hardly know what to say about it," replied Mr. Dowling. "Only I know this, that there has not been anything in all my recent ministry that has troubled me more than this, and by God's help I am going to do my best to change this feeling on their part. Of course, they are wrong in a measure, but is not the Church to blame, also? Anyway, Miss Fielding, I promise

you to do my best for your brother, and I believe he can be saved for the Church and be a wonderful element in the work of bringing the unions and the churches nearer together. Perhaps they do not understand us, and I am quite sure we do not understand them.

"Now I will tell you what we will do. You come to our church, take your class in the mission, be one of us in interest and service, and we will gradually get into his heart and life. You cannot do the greatest things in the world all at once. We will be patient, but persistent. It is easier to turn electricity or steam into a new channel than it is a life. I am convinced that any man can be reached by love and the spirit of God. You get him to come next Sunday. I will watch for him, and be sure to grasp his hand, and also to introduce him to some of our best people. We will use all means toward the same end."

"He is so opposed to it all," said Elsie, "that I am afraid, and yet I will try not to lose any faith, but will just give all my prayers to this, and I am so glad that you have come. I believe God sent you, although I was almost ashamed of these two rooms as being all of our home, and being up three flights of stairs, but now I do not care, and I will tell you more about him some time, and my coming here, and why everything is just as it is."

"That is what I want to know," replied he, and in his tone was deep interest in everything which concerned others.

"But I must go," he continued, as he looked at his watch.

His call had been an informal one, even if it had been the first. It did not carry the professional air, but a warmth of love that made her say three times before he had closed the door "that she wanted him to come again."

When he had disappeared she sat down alone in the room with some of the strangest thoughts and feelings of her life, mingled joy and wonder and hope. Yes, in the combination was an element of faith—simple, yet confident.

She was powerful in her womanly characteristics, yet childlike in her purity and simplicity.

She bowed her head to the table and only thought at first, when almost unconsciously she was praying, and the tears of deepest gratitude were dropping upon her hands, while angels came from heaven to gather up the precious jewels.

Her brother was also passing one of the signboards of his life and stood at the fork of the roads.

Oh, that he might turn to the right. Every man has strategic points in life. He is victor who follows his vision. The man who refuses to see or refuses to obey is lost.

It was a stormy night in Union No. 10.

The necessary business had been transacted, and the time was ripe for interest and enthusiasm in the one absorbing topic. Not only was there a strike on the part of their fellow-workingmen, but they were standing before a lock-out in one of the factories where several hundred of the men were employed. As far as they could see, they were absolutely guiltless.

Of course, there had been some talk of objection to the introduction of new machinery to take the place of the men, and especially the skilled men, and now the company, some one represented, had sent to a distant city, and were shipping in a whole crowd of non-union men to take their places.

It was only report, but enough evidence around it to convince them of a foundation in fact.

Every man was ready to have something to say, even if he had never attempted a speech in the meeting.

Most of the sentiment uttered was bitter, and many of the words were bullets.

The whole spirit was fight—and why not? It was a question of right and justice. A question of bread and home.

Frank Peters, one of the leaders in speech, declared that it was more than that. It was just as great a question as lay in front of Abraham Lincoln

when he signed the Emancipation Proclamation. It was a question of liberty. "We are slaves to the present system," he shouted, and everybody cheered. His blood was now at the boiling point as he cried: "Fight! Yes, fight; that is our only hope. I would just as soon carry a musket in this cause as to carry any gun that was shouldered in the War of the Rebellion. Yes, rather. This battle and this cause is farther reaching. We ought to cry in the labor unions, 'Liberty and Union now and forever, one and inseparable.' It is inseparable from our unions, and the victory we must have and will have."

Again the applause was tremendous, and he scarcely waited for silence before he plunged into a wave of his own kind of eloquence against the criminality of this present proceeding upon the part of the employers.

"They want everything, and are willing to use us only as machines. When the machine can do more or better, we must be thrown out to be the old, worn-out, rusty rubbish of society. I, for one, stand firmly against the whole infamous proceeding, and will starve before I give up the fight."

He sat down amidst a roar of noise, part talk and part the confusion of approval, but before order was restored Tim Marden was entering vigorously and almost violently into the discussion.

He began talking about the street car strike, and the perfect justice of their cause. Their hours were too long, and their pay was too small, and there was no help for them, only in making their righteous demands, and, when they were refused, to strike.

Some one interrupted: "Yes, but they might have tried to arbitrate it first."

The interrupter was silenced, and the speaker went on:

"Neither we nor they have much sympathy from any source. The public does not appreciate our position and does not realize our wrongs, nor the injustice we are constantly suffering. Neither do they understand that if it was not for our unions it would be a thousand times worse. They do not know how we have by hard fight secured all the advantages we now possess, and that the iron heel would press us harder than it does if we did not squirm and twist and struggle as we do. The people outside of our organization will come to see differently some day. Keep up the battle, my boys, keep it up. The Church and the ministers have religion, but in the place where it ought to be practiced most, not an atom of it is seen. Some of them do not know what religion is. Why don't they help our cause, if they are harping all the time on the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount? They ought to be the first to help us, and they could if they would, but they

don't seem to have any sympathy whatever. They are afraid of losing their support by losing Sam Dexter and his kind—millionaire church members. They would rather have him than help us. I tell you, the whole business is out of shape. Society and religion and everything.

"See that hand?" said he, and he pushed out his great palm in front of him with an energy which almost dislocated it. "That will be palsied and dead before I give up the battle. I will help the street car men, and every other man, and that right arm, I hope, will wither and die while I live and drop from its socket if I do not keep my promise."

They gave another cheer to the echo, and some one else took the floor to swear allegiance to Union No. 10 and make a plea not to give in.

A half dozen were attempting at one time to say their say, but the man who had the best lungs had his chance first.

There was one young man in that company who was having the greatest struggle of his life. The severest demands were being made upon his moral heroism. A deep conviction was in his soul. Should he hide it or slay it, or swear allegiance to it even though he faced the mouths of a thousand cannon? He had spoken before. They were always glad to hear him, and sometimes called for him, but now he was trying to hide himself and answer the voice

which only his own soul heard. It was clear and distinct. There was no question about its demands and its reality.

Henry Fielding was not a Wendell Phillips, but he lived in the same world, and in his own sphere was subjected to the same forces and experiences.

He had only the week before read a part of the life of Phillips. It was now fresh and vivid and emphatic in his memory. The great man's life was so far removed from his that he had never thought of bringing even the illustration to bear upon his own day and own world.

How little we know of the meaning of a single incident in another life, or a single sentence from another lip in its relation to ours. The page of a book may make the paper of a kite which carries the first strand of the bridge over an impassable chasm.

Henry had been reading with great interest of that wonderful hour in American history when the young patrician, Wendell Phillips, was in his law office in Boston and heard the shouts of a mob in the street; how he rushed to his window to see the citizens of his own city dragging William Lloyd Garrison over the pavements with a rope about his neck. The blood marks were left upon the sharp stones. They cursed him and kicked him, but he shouted that he would not be silent, but must be heard.

The young lawyer, with a lofty plan for life—a pol-

ished attorney for the higher class—looked out upon that cruelty and inhumanity, only to find his blood becoming hotter in his veins, while he stamped his foot in indignation as he closed the window, and sat down in the struggle with his own soul.

He, in that sacred moment, heard Christ say: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me," and when he heard the Saviour of men say that, he made the holiest resolution of his life: 'I will follow the right and the liberty of my fellow-men, even if they mob me and I die in the shame of a wicked age."

Then on the platform of Fanueil Hall he arose to deliver that famous speech, amid the hisses and abuses of some of the best-known people in America, but he braved the cyclone of wrath, and suffered for Christ's sake, until in the years, the very people who slandered him, and would have murdered him had they dared, led their children to his monument in that same city, and told them to read his name and never forget it, because it was one of the greatest on all the pages of history.

This wonderful act of sacrifice and heroism had made such an impression upon Henry that when it came back now, it was with renewed emphasis. Some things grow in memory as well as in the soil. God's sunlight falls upon it, and heaven's drawing

power brings an oak out of an acorn here, as well as upon the hillside.

His struggle was in a smaller circle, but it was just as intense.

Conscience and duty and right had just as much to do with it. Yes, sacrifice may be covered in Henry Fielding's life, but it was covered only because of its value and sanctity. Life was not dear to him. He was now hearing only part of the fiery speeches, just enough to bring more heat to his own burning convictions.

Some things had been said here and before this which he knew were too extreme and almost past the boundary line of truth. The wholesale condemnation of the Church and the ministers in their relation to the labor union was unjust, and he never, until now, had realized it.

He had thought and said the same thing, but he kept repeating to himself "there is one bright exception I know, anyway, and there must be others." Perhaps we have injured our cause as much as they or anybody else have injured it, by not investigating and understanding the churches and their people, and then making such broad and sweeping statements. Ought not somebody to——

Just then Paul Spaulding secured the floor. He was a bright young fellow, who had received the best of education, and had chosen to learn a trade

with a view to knowing his business before he attempted to manage a place of his own. He began by saying that they knew him and knew how sympathy for the union and its work had grown upon him, and he was going to see justice done, even though his life's ambitions were blighted. He said he had hoped to see public sentiment aroused in their behalf and the churches their special supporters in the struggle for the right, but he went on: "As has been declared here to-night, it seems to be going farther away from them. The preachers live better than we do, and are satisfied. They do not seem to care about our condition and absence from the church. If they would, they could change this whole stream and turn it into another and better channel.

"I noticed that one of them did venture in the city last Sunday to preach about 'Would Christ belong to a labor union?' I did not hear for myself, but it was the old story they tell me. He did not take any firm stand or even answer his own question. They say he just smoothed over the rich employers in front of him, and gave some platitudes about labor, and that was about all there was to it. Yes, one man told me that he said positively that Christ would not join a labor union."

The struggle had grown with more intensity in Henry's soul, and the question was: "Should he be true to his convictions, or any way true to that which

was fact concerning David Dowling's answer to that question, and not get any applause, or should he speak as the others had, and be cheered."

The picture of Fanueil Hall came before him constantly. He saw the pale face and slender physique of Phillips, and the striking attitude of his courageous soul as his long arm swung around in thrilling eloquence, and his finger pointed toward the Attorney-General.

Just then something whispered to him with distinct utterance, "Coward—coward."

Instantly, he was upon his feet, and began to speak, pushed on by the holiest impulse of his life.

"Gentlemen," he began, "I rise to declare myself once more on your side, which is the side of right and humanity and God. You know my sentiments concerning our cause, and in this present situation they have not changed one iota. If we cannot have justice without a strike, I will lead the strike and starve in the battle. I do not believe we have had our just share of the product of our toil yet. The greed of capital must be checked, and every ounce of my blood is ready for sacrifice in behalf of the honest and hard-worked men of this land."

The cheers and approval had not before arisen to such a pitch as they did following these sentences. The listeners were all intent for more.

"But," he continued, "I wish to-night to register

my name on the side of fairness and truth. There is sympathy for us, and I have discovered it. It is one of the brightest stars in our sky. It is brilliant with prophecy. It is the flashing jewel of hope in the night. We have been pleading for justice—let us give justice to others. That is the only way in God's government to secure it for ourselves. Our cause is lost if we are hypocritical and demand that which we are not ourselves ready to give. At all hazards, let us have the truth.

"It has been said here to-night that all the rich are our enemies. I do not believe that. I have been thinking and seeing in these last days. While there is selfishness and coldness in a large part of that class of society, let us not forget what some have done and others are doing. Call the other kind the rule, but do not become wilfully blind to the exceptions.

"Then it has also been said several times that the Church is absolutely indifferent, and the working-men are outside of the Church because the churches are out of touch with them and do not care. It has just been said that one minister in the city ventured to show a shadow of interest in us last Sunday, and advertised our cause as his subject, but proved a traitor to us even then, and surrendered himself and the cause up completely to the good graces of the rich."

It was as still as death, and every man was looking

directly at the speaker, and most of them were not touching the backs of their chairs.

He paused, and then said: "I was there, and heard every word of it. He did not say just what I would have said, or what I wish he had said, but I am convinced that he was honest and true to his convictions, and more, I am sure, he is our friend. He stood up boldly, and said, without any reserve or hesitation, that Christ would join a labor union, and he pleaded for justice and liberty and salvation; justice for the toiler, liberty for society, and salvation for the man. He said that was the creed of the union to which Christ would belong. He was not unfair to either side, but a kingly man in his place. I know we misunderstand some of the churches and some of the ministers. They are not all alike in this respect any more than others, but they are coming toward us.

"Gentlemen, as we love our cause, let us go toward them. Go half way. Be fair. The Church and the preacher may yet be our champions and our best friends. Anyway, here stands one man who will never condemn again until I know. I will be true if I die in this or any other cause, God help me."

There was not a sound of applause. Sometimes the impression is too great to admit an audible approval. It almost touches the sacred. Often the ut-

terance of the soul closes in an environment of solemnity.

Who would dare say that Henry Fielding was not inspired.

What is present day inspiration?

Why not his great honest soul as well as that of a Phillips, or a Henry, or a Webster, or a Clay?

No one attempted to speak for a complete sixty seconds.

Then the chairman of the meeting looked from one side of the room to the other, and said:

"I, for one, would be in favor of having that kind of minister come and speak to us right here. I don't see anything out of the way about that. Why not? I don't know to whom reference has been made, but I do not care who he is. I would like to hear him on that same subject."

Henry rose again, and said:

"Do not misunderstand me. I am just as much of a fighter as any man of you, and am with you to the last chapter of our struggle. I am anxious that we take the right method always. A slight mistake may lead us a long distance out of the way. If the Church and the ministers are the greatest moral and spiritual factors in society, why not get in right relation with them—at least, one of mutual understanding? Misrepresentation may be our ruin. Perhaps we have said so many times, 'they do not want

us' that we have come to believe it, and are believing a falsehood.

"I would like to make a motion that Rev. David Dowling, to whom we have referred, be invited to come to the next meeting, and address us."

Some one seconded the motion, and it was put to vote and carried by about two-thirds voting for it.

The meeting very quickly came to an end, and most of them did not know what to think.

Henry Fielding had thrown a shell into the very centre of things, and it had burst with tremendous effect.

CHAPTER V.

IN DAVID DOWLING'S STUDY.

Mr. Dowling reached home about ten o'clock that evening. He threw off his overcoat and hat and walked directly through the hallway into his study, which was at the rear of the house.

He sat down in his accustomed place, but not to make sermons.

His eyes dropped to the floor, and his arm rested nervously on the arm of his chair. In a moment or two, he walked across the room and threw himself upon the lounge. That was not rest. Position is not rest. It asks for something more than a lounge. The downy couch of the king's palace is not named "rest."

There was a great burden upon him, an irresistible pressure. In that condition, a man might as well stand up as lie down—perhaps better.

His wife called to him from the head of the stairs, and when he answered, she said:

"I just wanted to know if you were in. I thought I heard you. Where are you?"

"In the study," he answered, "come down here."

When she entered he did not even turn his head

toward her, and as she had before, ten thousand times, she asked:

"What is it troubling you? Oh, don't worry, I am sure you can't bear the whole burden of the world. Just throw it off now, whatever it is, and go right to your room and to sleep. But tell me, what were you thinking about?"

"Etta," said he, "you know me better than anybody else, and you know that I have conscientiously tried to do my work in the best way in order to reach men for Christ, and yet I am not satisfied; far from it, and further than ever to-night. If somebody will only show me a better way, I will do it. I will give up anything. I will sacrifice every plan. I will do twice as much work, if possible, if only a better result can be attained."

"Well, David," said Mrs. Dowling, "if you do twice as much, you will have to have longer days and a shorter life. You work now fifteen hours a day, and seven days in the week, and that is a grave digger's shovel, and you begin to look like a ghost."

"But, maybe," said he, "I am not doing it in the right way. Perhaps the Church is off the track. Any way the results are not much, and they seem to get less each year."

"What brings this upon you with such force to-night?" asked she.

"It is not a sudden thing with me; only some new

developments in it. I want to reach this great mass of workingmen, and men outside of the Church. The lodges and the clubs are crowded and increasing in number every hour. The labor unions have large and enthusiastic meetings, but the men are not in the churches, and many of them are more than indifferent. They are against us."

He then told her about his call on Elsie Fielding, and her sorrow about her brother, and his feelings concerning the Church, and also of another woman whom he had seen that evening, whose husband was never at church, and who even took the children to the park on Sunday and away from Sunday school.

"Oh, David, you are looking on the dark side; you are tired, and it will not be foggy when the sun comes up. Go ahead and do the best you can, and let God take care of the result."

"That's not it," continued he. "This is a growing conviction. It is one of the most vital questions of the day for the Church and society both. What is wrong? If I only knew. There is one man in the world who would do what Christ ordered him to do, even if he carried another cross up Calvary. You know you had the door bell fixed Saturday. When I came downstairs the electrician had the outside wires and buttons off, and had changed the batteries in the cellar and been working at the whole of the machinery for a couple of hours, but could not

find out what the trouble was. He told me his dilemma, and I said to him that he was the electrician, but I was the sermon maker. He must take care of his end of it, and I would take care of mine. He went at it again, and called me afterward to tell me in partial anger and partial delight that just where the wires were attached to the bell, the point of contact was missing, almost like a hair for distance apart, and yet there could be no sound without it. In a few seconds he brought them together, and the bell rings now. I wonder if that is not just the trouble with the Church. The machinery is all right. The batteries of theology are all right. It is the point of contact, Etta; that is the trouble. We are out of touch. Jesus touched the leper and the blind, and all classes of men. That is the very genius of Christianity, and we have lost it. The only way to make music in this world of discord is to furnish the point of contact by divinest sympathy and Christ-touch of love. I believe that is the whole fault. This mission business and all that which only gives a hungry man food, or a beggar money, is not enough either. That is only the means or opportunity. Money given to men, if that is all, makes them curse the giver and pass by the Church. It is only the heart contact with the money. We are never going to reach the workingmen and save them by our present cold and formal methods. I must come

down off my high pulpit to get hold of their calloused hands, and let them see my large heart almost bursting through my vest."

Mrs. Dowling interrupted to say:

"You are the most consecrated man in the world, anyway, and I don't know how you can be any better."

"So you say, Etta, but I have to show that to these men who don't know me or understand me. We must not talk longer to-night, but this is my determination, and I will not yield if I die. It is the result of months of experience and thought and prayer. At all hazards, I am going to let the workingmen of this city know that I am in sympathy with their cause, and will do all in my power to help them. I will not preach it all of the time, but I will live it all of the time, and preach it fearlessly when the hour demands it. I can live on half of my salary, but I cannot live on duty neglected or feared. I am going to get hold of these men and show them that Christ would join a labor union. I have taken his name as mine. Then I must be a Christ to them. It may take time, but I will help in the revolution. There is one man I am going to touch anyway. I have promised it, and I will begin with him. I could tell when I saw him to-night that I had seen some of the best material in the human family made up in him. I

want you to help me pray for him. Christ took one at a time. This is my Nicodemus."

She knelt at his side, and the study walls never echoed a more earnest prayer than the one David Dowling breathed out to God that night.

There was something else to take place in that study before Saturday night.

Henry Fielding had been appointed a committee of one to carry the invitation to the minister to speak at the next union meeting, and while Mr. Dowling was now in his study, Henry was at home at the same hour, and remaining sleepless for a long time.

He marveled at himself. He wondered about the speech he had made and the criticism he had aroused. He said over and over again: "I know they have and will misunderstand me, but I am going to be true at any cost, and I will prove to them that I am their best friend yet. Some of them carried a sneer at my sentiments and opposed the motion about the minister, and I heard remarks afterward—yes, I suppose there were many I did not hear. Anyway, I will stand by it whatever it costs."

He tossed from one side to the other and tried to use will power to keep his eyes closed, but they saw more than they ever saw when open and in the brightest light.

"Even Richard," thought he, "did not give much encouragement. He voted for it, but that was about

all. I suppose the fellow did not know what to make of it, or what to do. He will be all right and stand by, I know; but what days these have been, not great outward changes, but there is a marked difference in me somehow."

It does not take long to change an honest man's mind. He is even more ready to move his position than a knave. There was more than one new element in the life of Henry Fielding. The new truth had captured him, he was its slave. That is the largest freedom in the world.

But another throne was rising up before him, and upon it was a queen of truest royalty.

He had suddenly met his ideal womanhood.

Was it only a dream, or was there some reality in it?

His mother and sister were dearest to him of anybody in the world, and he had never cared for another, only the boy's devotion to a school-girl; but that had vanished like the spring rose in the heat of summer and the cold of winter.

Yet the root, and life, and nature were there waiting to blossom again after the storms.

"What a fool I am," thought he, and almost said it aloud that night at twelve o'clock. "She is a million miles away from me, and I am kept awake by the lack of brains. The white matter is loose in my cranium, and cannot rest because of too much room

to float about. Here goes for sleep and some common sense," as he took a new turn on the couch.

But some giants and armies are more easily conquered than thoughts and dreams. They fall only to rise again and renew the battle, even if it takes all night.

Henry had only seen Grace Chalmers for a few moments, but something more than a rich girl with attractive ways had crossed his path.

There is something about these sudden meetings of life that we cannot plan, and whose power we cannot measure. It was more to him than if an angel had stopped him on his way and revealed something strange and startling to him. He could not explain it, and would not dare tell it, but can any one think less of him who knows the human heart and the wonders of life and love? Yes, they are one and the same. Life is love, and love is life. Each four letters, and they begin and end the same.

These new thoughts and conquering fears in his heart give greater admiration for Henry Fielding.

Emerson says: "All the world loves a lover."

There is a great void in any young man's life who has never experienced the hours through which he was now passing.

Just before he entered into a restless sleep, he received comfort from calling himself insane to think of her. "And still," said he, "she was mighty attrac-

tive in her way, and treated me as her equal. It is her own fault if a fellow, with only a workingman's wages, and a sister to support, thinks of it. She did it. Why did she not toss her head, and almost refuse to speak, as I thought every girl of her kind would?"

He passed into a surface sleep, and if Elsie had been awake in the next room she might have heard him say aloud in a partial dream:

"Anyway, I would like to see her again."

The week passed on uneventfully, but in the secret silence of his own soul he carried the most sacred thoughts of his life. This is the holy of holies of the human heart, and not even a mother or sister can enter the sanctuary. It is the inner temple, and the holiest visitor is the first and purest thought of love.

Offend anything else under heaven, or even in it, before offense is given to that, because God is Love, and the devotion of human hearts ought to be a part of the Divine.

Saturday evening came, and found him not ready for his errand, but it must be done. He was in it, and was man enough not to back out.

The call upon the minister had to be made, and the invitation given.

Immediately after supper, and after a wandering of conversation, because his mind was upon the errand, and what he was to say, Henry started out, only to hear Elsie say:

"I am glad you have to go. I know you will like him better. I never had a pleasanter call than the one he made here."

David Dowling had just said to his wife:

"I am to stay home for once to-night, I hope no one will ring that perpetual-motion bell. I almost wish the electrician had not found his point of contact."

He turned from the hall into his study, to pick up a new book which had been waiting for this evening, or some other, when the music of the bell was heard.

It was discord to him, and almost made him feel unministerial and unchristian. It was only momentary though, and the usual cordial manner and smile came home, and they told him a young man wanted to see him a moment.

He called out:

"Have him come right in here."

When Henry walked toward the study, Mr. Dowling came to the door to greet him. He said:

"Why, I am surprised to see you, but I am delighted," and he was.

The other spirit was human; this was the Christ and the better nature, and the most of it was in him.

"I would not have ventured to call," said Henry, "and I now dislike to disturb you, but I have a message for you, and will detain you only a moment."

"You are welcome as long as you can remain. I will not let you go right away," replied Mr. Dowling.

"Thank you," said Henry, "but I came from one of the labor unions, Union No. 10, to which I belong, and the men want you to attend our next meeting and speak for us."

A new color came into the minister's face, and a puzzled expression gathered. In a moment of surprise, he hardly knew what to say. Then he asked:

"What night is it to be?"

It was only a question to take time and give him opportunity to think. He asked where it was, and if this was an innovation, etc., only for the same reason, and then said:

"I would like to do anything I can for your cause in as far as it is right, and I will do this if it will help in any way."

Henry replied emphatically that it would, and said he had been the instigator of it.

"The men," he went on, "are out of touch with the Church, and I believe they are out of relation with that force in society which can and ought to help them most. Understand me. I am not, and I don't believe most of them are far away from the Church. They are only waiting for the opportunity to come to show their true spirit."

"Is it true," said Mr. Dowling, "that they sneer at the Church and applaud the name of Christ?"

"No," said Henry, "I have not heard that, and if that is done it is the exception, not the rule. They simply stand one side and carelessly stay away from the Church. They claim that the preacher is out of sympathy with them, and does not care about their burdens, and I will have to confess to that as my own fault for a long time."

Henry blushed a trifle as he looked toward the floor and said:

"I used to go to church and to Sunday school up in the country. I never joined the Church, but sometimes thought I was a Christian. When I reached here and entered into this great whirlpool of humanity, struggling against wrongs and for rights, dying in the almost useless effort, I became cold and indifferent to everything which went by the name of religion. It didn't seem to me there was much in it."

Mr. Dowling interrupted to say:

"Tell me all about it. I am interested and even anxious to find out my own fault in the matter."

"Well," said Henry, "I have told you about all. I confess to fault on my part, but I tell you there are many things that ought to be made right, and the Church ought to do its part at least, to bring Christ into the everyday life and business of the world. There is not much chance for a man in these days. The odds are so great. I had bright dreams when I came down here, and have done my best,

but wages half the time have been cut down, and sometimes we have been out on a strike, and then I have a sister to care for. There has been almost enough in all this to keep me away from the Church; yes, I might as well say, 'Away from God.' If I am honest, as I must be, I am quite sure 'away from church,' means in most cases, 'away from God.'

"Do you feel just the same now, Mr. Fielding, as you always did?" asked Mr. Dowling.

"Well, I can't say that I do. There has been no outside change in my life, and yet I am coming to look at some things differently. At least, I am realizing my own fault more, and seeing the Church, yes, seeing you in a little better light. That sermon last Sunday morning has done something for me, I am sure, and that is what makes me want you to give something of the same kind to the other men. I believe they will receive it and get great profit from it."

"Just what do you want me to talk about?"

"Oh," said Henry, "I leave that to you. You know best; only show them that the Church and the ministry are in sympathy and will help in any way possible—at least that they will be just to both sides and all men. They believe that you bow and bend to the rich, even at the sacrifice of truth."

"I will be there," said David Dowling, as he struck the study table with his hand, "and I will have

them know that that is not true. If it has been, by God's grace, it never will be again."

"Thank you," said Henry, "I am glad to carry that report, and must go now."

"Don't hurry, I want to hear a little more about yourself. I wish I could do something for you. I have been thinking about you all week, and praying for you. I believe God sent you here to-night. I wanted this evening alone, but I would a million times rather have you here, and that is honest."

Henry had risen to go, but almost unconsciously settled back in his chair again.

"If you and I could understand each other, that would be a splendid beginning," continued Mr. Dowling. "A mustard seed with magnificent possibilities in it. I do not want to go to your union, unless I feel that I have one friend and helper in the cause."

"Oh, you can count on me for that," said Henry.

"But I mean more than you think. What a wonderful thing it would be if you were a Christian man yourself, and carried the influence of Christ into the organization, and did your part, which would be a great part, in swinging the Church around toward the workingmen. They never can be reached in any other way than by some manly fellows, like yourself, being the leaven in their society. I come, and no matter how warm my heart is, they say it is cold,

and I am only a religious professional. Here is the combination that will do it. Some of their own kind and the preacher with them. Oh, how God would move this part of the world if only some of you men and the ministry were banded together. I, for one, promise to go to the very end of duty's path. I do not care where it leads me. I have not been just right either. Love and sympathy and interest must play a greater part in my life than sermons in the future."

"I do not know just what you mean," said Henry, "but I will do my part."

"Be careful how you say that, Mr. Fielding. Cannot I call you Henry. Your sister told me the name."

"I would rather have you address me that way," said Henry.

"All right," replied Mr. Dowling. "Now I will go on. Be careful how you say that: 'Your part'—'your part.' No man can do anything for others, who is not first right with God himself. That is the Divine law. Any one who neglects a personal duty, cannot influence others for the right. Any man who has lost himself cannot point out the way to others. Love for God precedes love for man. No, not just that. They are one and the same. You have said here to-night, Henry, that you are not right with God. You have been away from the

Church for years. You have been even on the verge of infidelity."

"No, I cannot say that last," said Henry. I will not own to that. I always believed——"

"Hold on a minute," said Mr. Dowling. "Infidelity has as much to do with the heart and life as with the head. You might say there was a God, and yet be an infidel to Him, having no fidelity to Him or His cause, disloyal and untrue to Him, and to the best that is in you. Anyway, Henry, you would not say that you were a Christian, and that is what I want you to be—saved by Christ's blood, and that alone, and then you could be able to help the laboring men in Christ's way—not simply to live a moral life, but just surrender to the Saviour, and help Him make the Church what it ought to be. He, through you, will save society, and that is the only way it ever will be saved. It will take time, but His spirit is destined to conquer. He needs you."

"I have never looked at it just like that," said Henry. "I have thought I was as good as church folks, and as good as I could be under the workingman's circumstances, and that was all that was necessary."

"Oh, no, Henry, every line in the Bible is contrary to that. If you could save yourself. For what did Christ come to the world and die? His blood was necessary to your pardon and your trust in

Him and surrender to Him and confession of Him. Make it yours now and forever. That is the meaning of being born again, and the Church is His agent upon earth to bring this to the hearts and lives of men. Put your immortal soul and earthly life in Christ's hands, Henry, and you will be a new man. Oh, what a mighty influence you can wield in Union No. 10. A thousand times more than I can. I have even wished that I was a workingman, and could belong to the union in order to touch and reach other men."

Henry leaned with both elbows on the arms of his chair, and looked intently upon the floor, as if he was counting every thread in the carpet. He was in the deepest thought of his life, but he really wanted to go, and almost wished he had not come. He did not expect quite as much as this.

Mr. Dowling, with more feeling in his voice, continued to tell him that it was not following the example of Christ in order to be saved or help men most. "It was the atonement for sin that was the saving power in the world, and the only power." He pleaded with him to look at it right and to act according to his best convictions at any cost. He told him not to be anxious, simply to touch the surface of the trouble in his own life or in the labor union.

"You need Christ," he said, "and so does your union—the Carpenter of Nazareth, but also the

Saviour of Calvary. Now, Henry, will you do your part?" he said, after a moment's pause.

Henry hesitated, and then replied:

"I cannot promise anything to-night. I thank you for the interest, and really think more of you for talking this way, but I am not ready to say just now."

"I wish you would," said Mr. Dowling, anxiously. "We may never have the chance to talk again."

"I hope we will," replied Henry.

"So do I," said Mr. Dowling; "but in this world you cannot tell. You will promise me to think about it. Yes, more—to pray about it."

Henry would rather have been out on the street just then, but he said in a manly way, and meant it, too:

"I will."

"Take my hand on that," said Mr. Dowling. "We are friends; your name will be in my prayer every day."

Henry Fielding passed out into the dark—no, it was the dawn. It is darkest just before the dawn.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TELEGRAM FROM HOME.

The next Wednesday morning, according to appointment in the Sunday school the Sunday previous, Grace Chalmers was to call on Elsie to talk with her about a committee in the church, on which they wanted her to work—a committee in the Young Women's Organization.

Elsie was not anxious to have her come, but her apartment never looked so attractive and spotless as it did that evening.

She was alone, and waited patiently, supposing that Grace would come early, but it was now after eight o'clock, when she heard her step in the hallway.

She had already told her of the stairs, and their home, so different from hers, and that changed the situation by creating no surprise and calling for no apology.

Grace Chalmers always carried the same charm with her, and adapted herself to every condition with an art passing the work of painter or musician.

The greatest artist in the world may never have known a more skillful touch upon canvas or keyboard.

No one was better named than Grace Chalmers.

They must have had the prophet's vision when they called her Grace.

It does not seem possible that the same spirit would be equally as beautiful and attractive in the palace of the rich and the single room of the poor; but it was and is always.

Elsie's room was midway between poverty and riches, and it was no exception to the law of the world.

She entered now, as always, with a delightful familiarity which effectively destroyed formality. It was not condescension, but recognition of the real worth of the world as being that of character. She considered Elsie as her equal, and the mere surface circumstances of money or home was not able to destroy that divine equality in human society.

This is the only aristocracy. This is the only Christianity. This is the only solution of the social problem.

Grace Chalmers carried the key to the secret.

"What!" said she; "are you all alone? I rather expected to see your brother here, too."

"He is usually with me," replied Elsie; "but he is away more lately because he is so interested in these labor questions, and especially now because of the great strike in the city, and they are expecting trouble in their own manufactory. I believe they call it a 'lock-out,' but I don't know as I understand what

that means. Anyway, we won't talk about that to-night."

"Why, yes, we will," said Grace, "because I am interested in it, and more since Mr. Dowling preached that sermon, and we have had so much talk about it. You know I told you father did not agree with the sermon, but that is not strange, and whether his conscience has been troubling him or not, he has brought it up for discussion a half-dozen times since. I have argued with him about the minister having the right and duty to preach about it, and he told me this morning that I and the pastor had both better find out where our bread and butter came from. Perhaps I might better keep still and leave him to do all the talking, but I cannot help standing by the people who have the least, if they are at all in the right. I am really glad your brother is interested in the solution of these important questions, and I hope the men will receive what belongs to them. I would rather have my father do just right by the workingman and give me only half of what he now does, than not show the spirit of Jesus every hour and minute of the day. I have been in the homes of these men enough to know just how they feel about the rich Christians and the churches."

Elsie interrupted to say:

"I did not intend to start our conversation in this

channel. You came for something else, and we girls do not know much about the labor question."

"I know this," said Grace, "that that is the great barrier between the working people and the Church. I hear it wherever I go among them. If they had better pay, and some of them less hours of work, and could wear good clothes, and always have their Sundays, they would come to church. Anyway, many of them who don't now would, I know. Of course, some of that class of people are not honest in saying that, but many of them are. If I get a chance, I am going to ask your brother to do his best to right every wrong, and in some way help to get all these thousands in touch with the churches. My mission work does not amount to much as it is now. All my giving and service is but a drop in the large ocean of need. There is a great Christian principle which needs to be thrust into the heart of this trouble."

"That is what he says," replied Elsie, "and that is what they are all saying, I know; but what about that work you want me to do in the Church. I have been wondering what it is. You did not tell me, only made me inquisitive."

"Well, you know we have a Young Women's Organization. It is something like the King's Daughters, but does not go by that name. We have various committees, and each with their own specific work;

some to help in the Church, and others to come in touch with the work in the city, and to help the poor. I am chairman of the Missionary Committee, and we have confined it almost entirely to helping the needy right here in the city. I want you to be on my committee, and we can accomplish more together in this work, I know."

"I am willing to do anything I can," said Elsie; "but you want to be sure that I am the right one."

"I am sure of that already," said Grace, "and I have talked it over with Mr. Dowling, and he said you are just the one."

"I do not know as I understand what I am to do."

"Why, I do visiting and come in touch with these people. I find out their real need, and then help them, or have the society help them. But what they need most is what they get last, and that is somebody's love and sympathy. Christ did not have any money to give to men, but he just touched them and really loved them out of their sin, and made them able to help themselves."

"Well," said Elsie, "you show me how, and I will try."

"What is that?" asked Grace. "It sounds like rain, and I thought I heard it thunder, too."

"It is raining, I guess," replied Elsie, going to the window at the same time and raising the curtain to look out.

As she did so, there was a faint flash of lightning.

"It must be only a shower," she said.

"Yes," said Grace, "because it did not look much like rain when I came out, and I even hesitated about bringing my umbrella."

"You wait, and it will soon pass over, and Henry will be in presently to see you home all right if it does keep on."

"Oh, no, I will not wait for the rain or an escort either. I am used to going alone, and it is early and not far, and the streets are all light."

She had scarcely finished the last sentence when Elsie turned toward the door and listened a moment.

"Oh, yes, it is his step; I know it way at the foot of the stairs. He must have hurried, too, on account of the storm."

Grace did not speak for a moment. She was thinking what she would do now.

Henry was at the door before the decision was made, but she arose just as he entered, and said she must go, as she turned to speak to him.

He appeared surprised for a moment, but it was only on the surface, and if the truth was plainly told, it was not the rain which had driven him home early. He was quite willing to be there before Elsie's caller had gone. He said she need not go just because he came. If they had not finished their conversation,

he would agree not to listen, or interrupt, or he would go in the other room.

"Oh, no," answered Grace; "it is all over, and you will never know what it was. It is a secret, and very important, too. Isn't it, Miss Fielding?"

Elsie nodded her head, and added:

"I will agree not to tell him, either."

Grace was buttoning her jacket and making preparation to go, but Henry was not making any preparation to stay. He was in a great quandary. So much so as not to be able to think of a thing to say.

He wanted to go home with her, but did not know whether he even dared to ask her. "She would not want to be seen with him," and a thousand like suggestions flashed through his mind, to make the moments seconds, and his knees almost knock together.

What should he do? Oh, if Elsie would only come to the rescue, and say, "Henry, you go home with Miss Chalmers!" "I would be a willing slave, and not say a word," thought he. But Elsie seemingly could not understand, or else did not care.

He tried to motion to her without being seen, but his deaf and dumb signs were unread, and something had to be done, and done right away.

Grace said that she had had a delightful call, and turned to Elsie to say good-night, and then toward Henry, but he interrupted.

"You are not going alone this stormy night. You

need not say good-night to me. You can do that at your father's door."

She began by saying that it was not necessary for him to go, but ended nearer her heart than the first sentence, by adding that "he could have his way about it."

There are moments in life which have years in them, and are like the acorn as the forerunner of the mighty oak.

Henry Fielding had never passed such a moment in feeling or in fortune. He could not explain it or even understand it. It was a puzzle to himself.

No young woman had crossed his path before with more than a passing notice from him, but here was a rich girl meeting him by the merest chance and an impassable chasm between them. He never could bridge that, and in the silence he had said a score of times: "I am such a fool!" He had said also: "She would mock the thought of being seen in my company," but here they were passing out of his own house together. "By force," he was saying to himself. It was only like her father's coachman taking her home in the storm.

When they reached the street it was raining harder than ever. She drew her garments closely about her. And Henry could hardly believe it—he had almost unconsciously offered his arm. It was not courage, because that was not up to the necessary mark. It

was more excitement than anything else. And when she accepted, as she touched his sleeve, it was like an electric shock. Was it the lightning of the storm?

Anyway, Henry was struck.

She said, as they hastened on:

"This is so kind of you, Mr. Fielding, to come right out again in this dreadful storm for my sake. The next time I come I will do it in the starlight."

Henry suddenly replied:

"I will pray, then, for a sudden shower. I am satisfied with this, if it was not for you getting wet."

In a few moments Grace had turned their conversation toward the Church, and said:

"I hope you are going to be a regular attendant now at our church. I know you will enjoy the services, and you cannot help but like Mr. Dowling."

"I do," answered Henry; "I admire him very much. He is a minister to command respect, and I think he is on the right track now to reach the men. That sermon of his has occasioned a vast amount of discussion and healthy argument. I hope he will keep on in that way."

"So do I," said she, with an emphatic tone. "It takes courage on his part, but everybody respects him more. If there are wrongs burdening the workingmen, it is the Gospel which ought, and which only can, right them. The ministers ought to preach it,

and the members of the Church ought to live it. That may sound strange from me, considering who I am, but I love Christ enough to be true to Him in everything, even sometimes against my people. My sympathy is always with those who have the least in this world, if they are not deep in sin and guilty of bringing their own sufferings upon themselves."

"I am glad to hear you say that," said Henry, "and it is just that spirit which I have seen lately, which has changed my ideas somewhat, and is changing my life. I am looking at the ministers differently, and at the Church people, too, with new and better thoughts. I have been thinking in these last days that perhaps I ought to bear at least half of the blame for my own absence from the church, and the other men are in the same position. They have misjudged and made sweeping condemnation concerning the Church and the rich, and justified themselves in almost every way."

"It is more likely true," said Grace, "that both are in the wrong. Do you know what I think?" she continued.

"No," answered he. "I want to know; tell me."

"Well, it is that you can do a wonderful thing in this world now for Christ and your fellow men, if you were a Christian, and went from the Church right among these men with the very spirit of Christ. That is the great need. I cannot do half what you can,

and I don't really believe that Mr. Dowling can. They want to see Christ in the labor union, and you ought to be his representative, and show them how he would belong to the union, and what he would say and do."

Henry was almost stunned for an instant at her frankness and her familiarity in talking religion to him. He did not realize that it was her life, and that it was the intent of Christianity to live it and talk it everywhere.

He stammered out in reply that he supposed that she was right.

They were now at her home, and had almost forgotten the rain and the distance.

The parting was touched with something more than mere politeness, and Grace ventured to say, as he turned away, that he would be welcome any time in her home.

As he walked away, he said half aloud:

"Well, there is one exception at least. The world is not all cold and selfish. There is Christianity on earth, and it may be harder for a rich person to be in the Kingdom of Christ than the poor. I think that is what the Bible says."

The pressure of conviction was settling down upon him with tremendous weight, and Henry Fielding was not far from the Kingdom himself.

The next morning about nine o'clock Elsie was

startled by a sharp ring of the bell. She hastened to open the door, to find some one farthest from her thought.

A telegram was not an ordinary event in her life. This one was the first since she came to the city.

She could hardly wait to sign the messenger's book before she opened it, and when he disappeared she could scarcely muster the courage. "It must be something important. It is for Henry, but it certainly is for me, too. Can anything be the matter at home?" And a countless number of thought-flashes crowded into her mind.

In a moment she stood with the open message in her hand.

This was not only the first telegram, but never before had that expression taken posssesion of her face.

It was the mingling of wonder and surprise and anxiety and grief.

It read: "Come home at once. Your mother is very ill. Signed, Robert Matthews," an uncle of theirs, who lived near their old home.

Elsie stood with that yellow bit of paper in her hand as one transfixed, and read it and re-read it and wondered if it told all the truth, or if there was more to be said that the message could not carry.

These are the hours when queenliness and character are tested.

She had to cry. That was natural, and even

womanly, but Elsie Fielding was not the one to give loose rein to imagination or sorrow. Her second thoughts came quickly.

Blessed be they and the heart which opens for their reception.

"What must I do?" said she, not "what must I feel?"

In a moment she had thrown on her hat and her wrap, and was ready to go to the factory to tell Henry.

Steps were rapid, but not light.

He was summoned to the office on her arrival, and knew that something important had brought her, because this was the first time she had called him from his work.

She waited with the telegram in hand, but ready to pave the way by saying as he came toward her:

"Henry, I am sorry I had to come, but this is not very good news. Yet probably it is not as we may think. This just came to the house," and she passed it to him.

But she could not wait to tell him, and perhaps make it easier.

"It says mother is ill, and they want us to come."

While she was telling the story, he was reading it, and then stood holding it for a moment without saying a word.

When Henry was tested he could not be hastened,

and when his decision was made it was usually the best.

"I hope she is not very seriously ill," he said, with a sigh following it, and walked directly to the superintendent's desk.

"Mr. Whitney," he said, "my sister has just brought this message to me, which says my mother in Vermont is very ill, and they want us to come immediately. I must go right away, and I know you will have no objections."

"Certainly," said he, rather coldly. "This is a call which must be answered. I hope you will not find it as serious as it now seems," and he had already turned away before the last sentence was finished.

Their mother had not lost any of their love by their absence. Each week the home letter was on its way, and occasionally more than once a week some word or token of love was sent.

They had received her letter only two days before this, and then she was apparently as well as usual.

"What could be the matter?" was the oft-repeated and oftener thought question.

Henry told Elsie to hurry home and get all ready and he would go to the depot or some ticket office and find out when the first and best train went.

He discovered that it left at twelve o'clock, and gave them only about two hours to make preparation.

"But we can do it," said he, as he partially ran down the street and toward their home.

No time was lost, and at five minutes before the hour they were on the train, and had scarcely taken time to think of the object of their journey. At least, not any time to talk about it.

Now they had the afternoon, and it was crowded with wonder and increasing anxiety.

They knew about their mother's trial with their brother Will, and her deep sorrow over his life.

He had grown wild and even dissipated. They feared she had not told them the darkest side of it.

That was the real condition. She had not.

Out of her love for them, her mother's heart had encircled all of her own trouble, and she had lived on hope that her counsel and prayer would prevail, but each day had increased his appetite for strong drink, and almost each night of his life he came home intoxicated.

She never gave him up, nor did she ever threaten.

She only pleaded with him and prayed to God.

Never a night had she rested until he was in his room, and then she would kneel at his bedside and pray for her boy that he might be saved.

Sometimes he was too stupid to know that she was there—even though she held his hand, and her hot tears were falling upon it.

At other times it angered him, and he had even cursed her while she prayed.

That had almost taken her life, but it never triumphed over her love and faith.

Last night he had come home at midnight in sadder condition and meaner disposition than ever before.

The light was in his room. The bed was open for him as usual. His mother was waiting. As sweetly as an angel, she spoke to him, but received no reply.

He was intoxicated almost to insanity. It was temporary insanity.

She kneeled at his side again and made her accustomed plea and prayer, which seemed to enrage him and make him almost a demon.

He leaped from the bed upon which his drunken form had rolled, and struck her. She fell to the floor in unconsciousness.

Instantly what he had done almost sobered him. He kneeled down and tried to lift her up, but she was the same as dead.

He thought that she was dead. His efforts to revive her were of no avail. The passing moments of fright almost drove the effect of the alcohol away.

The horror of an hour had passed by, and no change.

"Oh, my God," he cried, "I am a murderer."

Before the morning his decision had been made, and he had fled.

Her brother by chance came to the farm-house in the morning, and made the awful discovery. The blood was upon her forehead, and just a faint sign of life remained.

Imagination revealed the dark secret.

Henry and Elsie thought most everything, but little had they thought of this.

The Vermont hills, through which they passed late in the afternoon, were never so beautiful as then in their autumnal glory.

It seemed as if a great avalanche of color had swept down the mountain sides, or like the resting place of countless rainbows.

The trees were all ablaze with color, and the valleys marked with richest farms and gardens.

The golden sunset added to the wonder of nature, and the reflection of heaven upon earth, and yet these two travelers were blind to it all.

We see through our hearts more than our eyes.

Every man has his own world, and he carries it with him.

To the joyful heart, snowflakes are jewels and grass blades are diamond sceptres, but to the sad they are both only common carpet, to be trodden upon, and even then to hurt the feet.

Their uncle was waiting for them at the depot.

He had the hardest task of his life in hand. He was a farmer, but sensitive in nature.

He was just the man to break the sad news.

He did not rush right into the dark facts, but by a gradual approach and winding pathway, he revealed the true condition.

Their anxiety tried to hasten him, but he knew the better way.

When at last it dawned upon them that their mother was dead, Elsie had to give way, and her tender heart almost broke in grief.

Henry's sorrow was just as deep, and too bitter for him to weep or speak.

Everything was stamped with sacred memories about that whole section of country, and each tree and stone of the old farm was written all over with unseen letters, but now the last remnant of attraction and interest, and even love for it all, had vanished.

Henry Fielding said afterward that he almost hated the sight of these familiar and once loved things.

The centre from which radiated all the charm was gone.

There is not so much in external circumstances as we estimate. They receive their value from something else.

One of the first thoughts which flashed into

Henry's mind was as usual: "Now, I must play the part of a man and a brother. This is harder for Elsie than for me. She is tender and weak and cannot bear what I can. I must get my arm around her;" and he did, both figuratively and literally.

She sobbed out the bitterest tears of her life on his shoulder.

Oh, what a kingship is that? The first thought of others.

In the Providence of God, and in the laws of the world, that is the most triumphant method of bearing sorrow and enduring suffering.

Thought of others is Heaven's remedy for self.

He went alone to wipe away his great tears, and stayed with Elsie to comfort.

They were more to each other than ever now.

Another dream of Henry's life had been blasted. His ambition for his mother, and his care of her had never come to realization, and in this awful tragedy she had left them, but there had entered into his life a new force recently, and he did not become embittered, but even told Elsie several times, "It must be for the best. Anyway, mother had better in heaven than he could ever have hoped to give her on earth, and he did not have prospects for anything for her just at present. She has a mansion now, and no mortgage on it, either."

These were days which seemed months. So many changes, so much sorrow, and events beyond realization.

As they entered the train to return, Henry said: "Elsie, I never want to come back again."

CHAPTER VII.

A MINISTER IN THE UNION.

Ever since David Dowling had publicly asked the question: "Would Christ join a labor union?" the mail had brought to him half a dozen or more letters daily in reference to it. Most of them were from union men, thanking him for his interest and eloquent sermon. Some of them were in the spirit of criticism, and a few even went so far as to denounce him for not having the spirit of a true radical.

He walked into his study one eventful morning in his life with a number of sealed letters in one hand and an open one in the other. He paused at the table, and then moved toward the window, where he stood looking out, in deepest thought.

Many questions were forcing their way into his honest heart. "Had he gone too far in this matter? Was it a part of his duty? Had he said just right in that one sermon, and in all other things he had uttered since? What ought he to do now?" etc.

No one of these was receiving a very satisfactory answer, and in fact they came so fast that one crowded out the other.

He held up the open letter and began to read it

over again. It was from a union man, and apparently a thoughtful man and earnest soul. It read as follows:

"Would Jesus be a trade unionist? Though no conditions are stated in the above query, they are nevertheless implied, and it is really, therefore, a hypothetical question. If present conditions are assumed to be the natural and permanent state of the world, then it seems evident to me that Jesus, as the champion of the poor and the oppressed, would advocate the formation of labor unions by workingmen to wrest from their masters a larger share of the wealth which their own toil is producing; he would under such conditions be a trade unionist.

"But we know that the continuance of present conditions is impossible. Such an assumption would be foolish. Jesus knew very well that change is the order of the universe. Whether we consider him as divine or human, He was more than a workman endeavoring to earn an honest living for himself and family. He was a teacher of eternal truth, a prophet of a true order of human life, an evangel of justice and brotherhood among men, a revolutionist of transcendent genius and ability, who desired the overthrow of all wrong and the establishment of what He called the 'Kingdom of God' 'on earth as it is in heaven.'

"Such being his ideal, it is as impossible to imagine

Jesus as a trade unionist as it is to imagine a trade union in heaven. Were He among us to-day, He would view life from a standpoint too lofty; He would be undermining wrongs too deep; He would be destroying ideas too all-pervading, and inculcating a philosophy too broad and all-embracing in its humanity to have a place in a movement which has for its object the elevation of any class, no matter how large or deserving that class might be.

"Jesus was not and could not be the 'practical' man who takes off his coat and attacks specific abuses with a club. His mission was the proclamation of eternal verities. He saw clearly that, so long as men are inspired by the desire to get the better of each other in any degree whatever, the coming of His 'kingdom' is in that degree retarded. Now, then, could He have a part in a movement having for its object the supremacy of organized labor?

"Any tool for the accomplishment of a specific purpose is the best until a better is devised; the trade union is the best tool known to large numbers of men, but it by no means follows that it is the best possible, nor that the objects now sought by these organizations are the best, even for their members. Jesus, if He again walked among us, would certainly see far ahead of us, as He did nineteen centuries ago. He would certainly follow the same methods of establishing justice among men that He saw were best

then. These methods are far richer in possibilities than any adopted by the trade unions. Nothing can supply the lack of a desire for justice among men, and He would again seek to instill that desire into the hearts of men, keeping Himself above the petty squabbles which are the curse of the human life. It is probable, also, that for this very reason He would be received by men now in much the same way that He was received before, for mankind is not yet done with crucifying its Christs and enthroning its Cæsars.

"Can we imagine Jesus as 'working under cover' or countenancing it by others? Can we think of him as refusing to allow a man to work because he did not belong to the union? Can we conceive of Him as aiding in the establishment of a boycott or in other ways seeking revenge for any injury, no matter how great? Can we even think of Him as trying to compel a fellow-man to join a union? If we cannot imagine Him as doing these things, it is idle to imagine Him as a trade unionist. Instead, He would be foremost in the attacks on those fundamental wrongs which force the trade union into existence and compel it to assume a semi-military discipline over its members and over its enemies as well, whenever possible.

"Among the stands I can imagine Jesus as taking were He to come among us and preach again, would be that of uncompromising hostility to all forms of

slavery. Whether this was the slavery of men to the owners of the earth and its resources, the owners of the rain that falls upon the just and the unjust, of the methods and processes of labor, the privilege of making and issuing money, the nation's highways and means of transportation and of transmitting intelligence, or of any other wrongful privilege conferred by law. I can only imagine Jesus as bending all energies to the complete overthrow of this slavery by preaching the truth that will make men free, without bowing his head in compromise with anything that conflicts therewith.

"Jesus would be a revolutionist of the most radical type, as He was before, standing for all the rights of man and against everything that violated them a hair's breadth. He would again be accused of turning the world upside down, and perhaps would be executed. But He would not be a trade unionist as that term is defined and understood to-day."

It was a long letter, but not uninteresting to him, and occasioned many pauses as he read it. At last he sat down and bowed his head on the table, and by chance (no, our chance is God's providence) his right hand rested upon the open Bible, and in his left hand he still held the letter.

After a moment's thinking, which was in reality prayer—what is prayer but the heart's desire after God and His will?—he raised his eyes, and at the

first glance he discovered that not only were his hands resting upon the sacred page, but that his index finger pointed directly to the line, "I have given you an example."

Almost unconsciously, he said: "Thank God for this light on my pathway. Christ died to save man, and He lived to show them how to work out that salvation. It is atonement and example eternally united, and ought to enter into my ministry, and into every workingman's life. No man ought to do anything that Christ could not do, or belong to any organization that Christ could not join. He not only gave the theory of life but the pattern also. He is the only example for a labor union man, as well as a minister. This is the great mistake about religion and about Christ—that he could not do and be what other men under existing conditions can be and are compelled to do and be. The very essence of Christianity is that Jesus was a man as well as God, and His life in the carpenter shop was a part of His redemptive work as fully as was His death on Calvary. His relation to the other carpenters of Nazareth and their organization, to the fisherman of Galilee and their union, was one of active service in behalf of honest labor."

Mr. Dowling then glanced down at the letter again, and thought: "Here is the fallacy—they make Christ an unreal factor to-day. 'He had the boldest

hostility to all forms of slavery.' Of course he had, and the labor union has no right to exist if that is not its righteous mission, too. Their work is his, their interests are His, their liberty and justice and salvation are His."

David Dowling paused in his rapid thought, and said to himself:

"Now, let me get this right; is there any difference, except in degree, between Christ's life and mine? Could I belong to a labor union? Could any Christian man? If so, why not then Christ himself? No reason in the world, or else there ought not to be a labor union. If some of the methods are wrong, Jesus would help make them right, and so will I, God help me.

"They make my Christ unreal, and His life different from that of other men. God did not intend it to be so. That makes Christianity heathenism. Christ would do exactly what any other man before God has the right to do. Oh, to teach men this, and the divine purpose concerning individual life and society. I must be more of a Christ myself to my fellowmen. I have taken His name. I am His representative to-day, and because the ministers stand such a distance from these men and their unions, they think that is what Christ would do, only to a greater degree. It is not true; it is not true! The workingmen are not all to blame. There is one preacher who will do

better. If I have to learn a trade to get in the union and influence the men and show them Christ, I will do it. Perhaps a trade would be better for some of us than a theological seminary. We might reach men better if we handled a saw of steel than the saw of some old commentary.

"Paul was a tent maker. He touched men and saved them."

It was now time for David Dowling to make his Sunday sermon, but he was at more important business. In reality, he was making sermons by a new and better method. He was listening to conscience, studying men, thinking of Christ and His relation to the millions of workingmen. That was a sermon not to be written, but to be preached with sublimest eloquence—the oratory and rhetoric and elocution and logic of a concentrated life.

He was tearing the last rag of formalism and professionalism from his calling and just lifting up Christ, so that all the men should be drawn to Him.

It was beginning right, because he was in Gethsemane now with Jesus. He knew how some of his people felt, and what some of his best supporters had said, and the conflict raged.

The tears rolled down his cheeks, and they were touched with crimson, too.

"Oh, Lord Jesus," said he, "help me to set my face to go steadfastly to my Jerusalem. May I not go to

extremes. May I not be deaf to duty's call or blind to the beckoning of Thy pierced hand? I will come. I will do all in my power to show men Thy sympathy and Thy willingness to belong to any union whose purpose is worthy and enters into the redemption of human society. Show me the path, and if it is only one step at a time I'll take it."

If every member of the labor organizations could have been witnesses to that scene, and heard that holy prayer, and known the deeper desire in his soul, how differently they would look at the minister. Yes, even at the Saviour of men.

This was the beginning of a new day in one minister's life, and it found its closing in a new experience, and a very bright one for Mr. Dowling.

This was the night for his address in Union No. 10.

He had tried so many times in the past days to decide upon what he should say on that occasion, and had torn up several abstracts and plans.

All day the same battle was on, and no good speech had come into his possession when night reached him, but he was not nervous.

There was a confidence in God which was his now, and always comes to the consecrated man.

According to the agreement when the invitation was given, Henry and Richard called for him.

There had been added another knot in the tie which

bound Henry to him, not known by Mr. Dowling, but Henry was perfectly conscious of it.

In the hour of sorrow he had pushed his great heart of sympathy against Henry's heart, and left an impress upon it never to be obliterated. It was language intelligible and indelible.

Elsie's tender and saddened heart had also known the power of love's contact as never before, because both Mr. Dowling and Grace had been so helpful, and carried the needed comfort at the most trying time of her life. Flowers had been sent to her, but the flowers most fragrant and lasting were those which angel hands had picked in the garden for her—attention, sympathy and sacrifice.

Mr. Dowling was all ready, except his speech, when the young men arrived. He met them at the door, and said:

"You might have thought I would not be ready and was not anxious to go, but you see I am."

He walked down the steps between the two, and for a moment took hold of their arms as a sign which every man understands. It was real friendship.

Henry said: "I am sure you art not so glad to go as we are to have you. Isn't that right, Dick?"

"That's so," quickly answered Richard.

"Yes," said Henry, "this is the night that I have been most anxious to go to a union meeting of any time in my life. I believe there is great good in it."

"I hope there will be," replied Mr. Dowling. "I am sure if you men know how dead in earnest I am in the desire to change the present condition of both the workingmen in their relation to the employer, and also in relation to the Church, they would listen and stand by me, too."

"Here are two fellows who will," said Richard.

"Thank you," said Mr. Dowling; "that makes me feel better and gives me security; a certain backing, and I will depend upon you."

"Well," said Henry, "I am the one who wanted you there, and I propose to help you all I can. You just go ahead to-night and say what you think—something like the sermon would not hurt, and even more along that same line. I rather think they will expect it, but I will not make any suggestion. You probably have it all ready."

David Dowling hardly knew what to say now, because he had several lines of thought in his mind, and was just trusting to Christ's help to formulate them, and he replied:

"No, I have not fixed it exactly, but, anyway, you may be sure that I will do what Christ desires, as near as I know it. I stand for him, you know, and this is one way at least for Christ to belong to a labor union.' "

When they reached the door and entered, the meeting had just been opened. Some business was being

transacted. All eyes were turned upon David Dowling as he sat down near the door next to Henry. There was great expectancy. It was an innovation, and the interest in it had called out the largest meeting they had held for a long time—if not the largest ever seen in that union.

Everything was quickly dispatched, so as to come to the address and the open meeting.

If ever a man was controlled by a burning desire to do the right thing, David Dowling was that man now. He was saying to himself: "Anything for thee, my Christ. Help me to be true and fair, and show Thee in the right light."

When he arose to speak, there was a ripple of applause, but not enthusiastic, because most of the men did not know what attitude to assume, and some of them had even voted against his coming.

He walked to the front and said:

"Gentlemen, I thank you for this honor, which I consider one of the greatest of my life, because of the importance of the occasion and because of the confidence you have manifested in me. I believe we are one in desire, and nearer to each other than you think. My work is different from yours, but I promise you now that my purpose is the same—in helping the cause of justice and humanity.

"We have been separated too long by misunderstanding, and the enemies of us both have misrepre-

sented us. I hope this event to-night will be the dawn of a new era in the relation of the Church to labor.

"Your call to me came from my venturing to ask the question, which I consider a vital one to you as well as to myself: 'Would Christ join a labor union?' I said 'Yes' then; I say, more emphatically, 'Yes,' now."

There was a shadow of excitement and a rustle of whispering as he continued:

"If the union has a right to existence in human society, and I believe it has, Christ would belong to it, if he was a carpenter in this city as he was a carpenter in Nazareth. If he came to the world in human form to-day, the divine plan would not be changed. It was the plan of the eternities.

"If He came to your city as his dwelling place, He would learn His trade, and join the union for protection, and for the ultimate redemption of all men. He would be one of your number to-night. Yes, He is, and would say, 'Come unto Me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

"His mission is not outside of the circle of labor. He began at the centre in the carpenter shop, and will not give up until His scarred hand touches every part of the circumference, and His power regenerates the whole.

"Now, I did not come here to preach. I invite

you all to come to my church to hear the sermon, and perhaps there will not be as much 'preach' in that as you think there is, but I am here now to say some things to you which lie at the very core of my heart.

"You would not want me to be hypocritical. I cannot be, if you do. I never spoke in my life with such conviction and such blood-earnest desire."

The men looked more intently at him, and some of them even nodded to each other. He had not only gained their attention, but he already had the respect and confidence of most of his auditors.

He paused a moment, and then continued:

"I propose to say something about myself first, and then something concerning you and your work. If you have misunderstood me and my methods, let me change that feeling, if I can. Do not be prejudiced. Listen and pass your own judgment.

"I sat a few hours ago by the side of a young man —he is now dead. He was dying of consumption, and they sent for me. He was a member of one of the labor unions. He was perfectly conscious until his death, and died while I was there. What was my first business in his presence and the presence of death? Every man of you will answer at once, 'To do all in my power to make that poor fellow ready to meet God. To help him in the final preparation for the next world.'

"It would be folly and criminal to talk to him

about this world, and trades, and work, and the wrongs of society. Eternity was just ahead of him, and was the only reality now.

"That is only an incident which illustrates the character of my whole life. I stand on the edge of the grave between immortal souls and their destiny.

"My first business must necessarily be their salvation hereafter. You say I am too other-worldly. How can I be otherwise? Yes, how can any thinking man put the next world secondary to this? If the preacher is 'too other-worldly,' most men are too much 'this-worldly.'

"The fact is that you cannot separate the two worlds. The divine plan is to save men in this by saving them for the next.

"If you thought that I ought to preach only concerning the questions of the hour and solve the social problems, you have mistaken Christ's work on earth and made Calvary only a tragedy instead of the atonement for sin.

"I have declared that Christ would belong to a labor union, and I will belong to yours, if you will have me, and help you all I can."

Henry and Richard started applause, but it did not reach a wave, only a ripple.

Mr. Dowling continued:

"But Christ would make His sacrifice for sin the

foundation of all salvation for society. He was not only an example. He was infinitely more. I am going to deal with social questions and your wrongs, but I must begin always at the Cross. If you think it otherwise, you have mistaken my sacred mission and the relation of salvation here to salvation hereafter. Another thing I want you to know about me and my ministry. I do not fear any man on earth, and I am not catering to any individual or any class. Your position is upon the outside, and many of you do not hear the sermons, and you cannot pass right judgment. At least, do not make wholesale condemnations. Many ministers are sacrificing everything for truth's sake, and have even given up pulpits and salaries and friends and all. They are ready to stand by you, if you will only stand by them. Here is one of them, anyway! My last drop of blood is yours, and out it goes in your cause for right. My church is open to you; other churches are anxious for you. The best place is yours. If it is not, I will resign my pulpit to-morrow. I wish we could form some mutual understanding—some better relation. I wish you had honorary members, or some class to which I could belong. I stand for Christ, and I would like to be in your organization. I would like to have every one of you in the Church, and there are more workingmen in the Church than statistics represent

and pessimists believe. Most of you are right near its doors.

"Now, let me ask a vital question about yourselves.

"Suppose Christ was a member of this union. Would everything in it be just as it is to-night? Would not some of the plans be changed? Would not the Golden Rule be the motto? Would not the Sermon on the Mount enter into all your relations with other men? You could not have Christ in here without having His spirit and example. I am sure some speeches would not be made, and some hasty actions would not be taken. Our employers would be treated as we ask them to treat us, with fairness and justice and sympathy. I do not say there would not be a strike, but every possible means to prevent it would be first exhausted. We would recognize duty and obligation and fidelity, and the other side as well as our own. Bitterness, and anger, and malice, and envy, and vengeance would not enter into our discussion or our actions.

"Also, if Christ would belong to your union, and help your cause, you ought to belong to His Church and help His cause, out of which the union and every other righteous institution grew. If the Church is not just as it should be, help Christ make it after His pattern. You cannot separate Christ and the Church. He said it was His body, and some wicked distinctions have been made by men, who said they

represented your cause, but misrepresented it. They have even said to me that there has been a hiss heard at the mention of the Church. How the heart of the Saviour must be grieved at that! It is His institution as the channel of salvation to the world. Help it; support it; do not stand outside of it. Do not claim it has purely a social function. Hear Christ say that you cannot save society without first saving the individual. 'Ye must be born again,' is the cry of the Church, and in that cry is the key-note of the regeneration of society and the salvation of the cause of labor. There is not too much philanthropy or too much reform in the world, and the Church is not too much interested in that. It is not enough interested in that, but it has a distinctively spiritual mission, and first things must be kept first, or less will be done than is now being accomplished.

"One of the fallacies of this day is that all people need is a change of environment, and they will be good. The whole Gospel is against this, and teaches that the soul right with God first changes external conditions; and, however much I might wish to do for any labor, or benevolent, or philanthropic organization, I must not compare them with the Church or neglect the first work of the Church for them.

"Jesus died to save a man who was immortal and eternal. That means that He would do all He could

for that man's welfare by association with your effort in the union or anywhere, and so will I.

"It is not a false position in which I place Christ, when I bring him into a labor union, or else I am wrong in being here now, and every man of you is out of his place. But I am simply trying to keep Christ's death and life right before the world. Ask of me as His representative anything that I can do for your benefit, and I will do it. I promise you my best co-operation and my deepest sympathy. I wish I might shake hands with every one of you on that promise."

Just as he was about to sit down, Henry Fielding arose and said:

"Here is one man who would like to shake hands with you, Mr. Dowling, and I wish you would stay where you are until we have all had the opportunity."

David Dowling looked confused, but Henry was in front of him in a moment, and then Richard, and following them nearly every man in the room passed by him to grasp his hand.

Then the chairman said:

"I don't see any reason why this union could not have honorary members, or some plan by which such a friend of ours and our cause as Rev. Dowling could be one of our number. I shall propose that change in our constitution at the next meeting."

The statement was greeted with the heartiest applause, and one of the most important meetings ever held in a union came to its conclusion.

Who can say that it was not an epoch-making time in the cause of the workingman.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE HOMES OF THE POOR.

After the service on Sunday morning, almost every one had passed out of the church. There were a few scattered groups of two and three still talking.

Near the door stood Henry Fielding, waiting for his opportunity to speak to Mr. Dowling.

In the other corner, Elsie and Grace were making some plans for their missionary work during the coming week.

Henry had been spoken to and welcomed as usual by several of the congregation, but now he was alone. He did not feel strange in a church, nor was he in any special hurry to get away.

As soon as Mr. Dowling was at liberty, Henry walked up in front of the pulpit where he stood, and received a hand grasp, which was only the sign of deepest affection.

Immediately some one else was in their presence.

Elsie and Grace had received a sudden impulse to ask Mr. Dowling and Henry to go with them the next evening, and visit some of the homes and see the needs in the poorest district of the city.

The invitation was met with almost immediate ac-

ceptance when the discovery was made that the evening was free from other engagements.

David Dowling would not have been so willing a few weeks or months previous.

A great change had come into his life, and now his heart carried a deep desire to help the poor and the oppressed and to serve his fellow-man, without regard to their station in life.

The soul of every man had taken on new value for him, and the Gospel new meaning and power. He said: "I have been anxious to do just this. I want an introduction to this kind of work, and I am going to do more of it myself if I can—at least, I want to come in contact with any man who needs Christ and me."

He had just been preaching about the blind man crying out for Christ to help him, and the surprise of the crowd who witnessed Jesus stop and leave them and their enthusiasm and worship in order to lift up a poor wretch who lay in darkness and poverty.

The conscientious minister preaches first to himself, and the truth which lay at the core of the Gospel now pushed its way relentlessly toward the very centre of his heart. He was moving in the footsteps of the Son of God—at any cost to his desire and ambition and comfort.

A new ideal was rising in his sky like a bright star. It was claiming and receiving his attention.

He once had aimed to be intellectually great; to create masterpieces of literature; to be rhetorical and polished in style; to command the admiration of the cultured and the rich. Now, all that must be secondary, and he was to save men, and by every legitimate means draw them to their Saviour and into the Church.

Instantly, when Grace Chalmers proposed this plan for Monday evening, he saw blessing in it for himself as well as others, and the meeting of a great need in his own life, for he had not made much investigation concerning the way the poor lived and suffered.

Henry hesitated a moment, because this was out of his line and the errand was new to him, but the very novelty of it attracted him, and then, again, there were other attractions.

He would go most anywhere to be in certain company, but the chasm seemed to increase in width and depth both, while no bridge appeared.

He tried to struggle against a certain feeling which he could not understand, and wondered whether he was a subject for the insane asylum, or what was the matter with him.

The whole situation seemed ridiculous to him, but he could not lessen the grip of something which was reality, and yet he did not know what to call it.

In the secret silence of his own soul, he had said often:

It was "sentiment," "infatuation," or a score of other words without definition, but he never had ventured to explain it by a monosyllable of four letters.

That would have been best, but it was too bold for his modest and inexperienced state.

His hesitation soon vanished like a snowflake in the warmth of the sun, while the flowers of his real desire appeared in his answer, that he would be delighted to go with them.

The next evening, by arrangement, they met at Mr. Dowling's home, and started their journey from that point.

They entered a downtown car, and Mr. Dowling sat directly opposite to the other three, that being the only vacant place.

He had been very quiet all the way, and now sat in deep meditation, as if no one was near him. A man can oftentimes be most alone in a crowd. The loneliest place in the world is in the centre of the rush of humanity which does not care any more for you than the car itself, and would rather push against you than against it.

The car was crowded, and he was out of reach of their conversation, but was deep in his own thoughts. They motioned to each other as he wrinkled his brow and almost closed his eyes. The motion of his hands

as they pressed each other told the secret of his nervousness. No, it was more than that; it was the honest soul in a man while in life's greatest struggle—to find the right path and take it, even though the heaviest burden lay directly across it.

He was saying to himself: "Let the sermon go. I must do more of this personal Christlike work."

David Dowling did not then know that that kind of a resolution and life was the theological seminary where the best doctrine and homiletics were learned. An essay is not a sermon—that is only anatomy. A sermon is something with blood in it. He was on his way now for the material which makes the life and effectiveness and saving force of the sermon.

A minister's study is not confined to the four walls of a small room and musty commentaries and moldy encyclopedias and machine-made sermons.

A man on one side of him was talking to the gentleman with him about a great opportunity in business. Some people standing in front of him were talking about the theatre, and their anxiety to get seats for the play that night, while some one near him, partially intoxicated, was muttering a jumble of unintelligible words, with an occasional oath in the mixture. He heard it all, but his thoughts were too overpowering to be conquered by it.

That was the picture of the whole world. The good surrounded by the bad, and the bad making the

most noise. But the good is here, and, though less often seen and heard, has not less power.

A single man with a holy determination is a greater factor in the world than some whole carloads of ordinary humanity.

As the car stopped at one of the crossings a small boy, burdened with a great bundle of clothing, which he was apparently returning to the tailor shop, tried to push his way on the car. The package was larger than the boy, and he was almost exhausted, as he dropped it partially in the doorway.

When the car started on, the conductor seized the boy by the arm and said: "You can't have that on here. You will have to get off again. It is in the way, and we are not supposed to be an express cart."

The little fellow looked puzzled and frightened all at once, and apparently did not know what to do. With only a nickel, and more than a mile to go, what should he do?

The car was at the next crossing, and the heartless conductor had his hand on the boy's shoulder again, ready to push him off, when suddenly a young man arose, who sat near the door and had heard it all.

He was Henry Fielding. The same impulse, so often appearing in his life, was at work again, and if all the world tried to stop him, he must go on. He suddenly seized the bundle, stepped in front of the boy, and said:

"My boy, you stay on that car—at least till I get off."

He then raised the huge bundle to his shoulder and stepped as far away to the opposite side of the platform as he could, and stood there with the load on his strong shoulder and the poor boy in front of him, amazed at his kindness.

Some of the passengers had not seen it, because of the calmness and skill with which it was done. Those who had were almost as much astonished as the boy himself.

The most startled one of all was the conductor. He pulled the rope and then began to talk, but the car went on its way, and Henry never spoke a word.

He stood like a giant, the kingliest among men.

Three pairs of eyes were fastened on him with a peculiar gaze.

Elsie was proud of her brother, and straightened up, as if she wanted to tell everybody that she was his sister.

David Dowling looked at the deed of courage and love, and glanced away to the floor to mutter, almost audibly: "Not far from the kingdom."

It was almost like Jesus, as he looked at the young man and loved him.

Grace was possessed with a different thought and feeling from the other two. It was something more than admiration. Money could not win her. Posi-

tion could not win her. Character was the only magnet. The divinity in manhood was the only sceptre to which she would ever bow.

When they were to leave the car, Henry asked the boy how far he had to go. It was several blocks distant. He then turned to the conductor, and inquired if he would allow the boy and his bundle to stay on the rest of the way. If not, he would go to the end with him.

The conductor did not turn his head, but answered gruffly—almost an indistinct grumble: "Yes, he can stay."

The influence of that act was impressed upon every witness, and they were to carry it to others, while the wave was not to break until it reached the shore of Eternity.

As they walked toward the corner, Mr. Dowling turned a look at the disappearing car, and then said: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Christ."

Henry did not feel any pride. There was almost something of the opposite in his heart that prompted the immediate turning of the conversation into another and more welcome channel. He said:

"Are we to trust ourselves to these two young women. How do we know where they will take us?"

"I feel perfectly safe," replied Mr. Dowling; "let them lead the way and we will follow."

Grace did not turn around, but went right on, and only said:

"You need not tremble. We will not harm you, and we will not let anybody else do so, either. We will be your protectors to-night; at least, I am not going to take you to any place where I have not been before."

They turned another corner, where the accustomed saloon gave out its bright light and poisonous odors.

A young man pushed through the half-screened doorway and staggered out toward the curb. He brushed against Mr. Dowling in his reeling movement and mumbled some meaningless sentences as they passed on.

David Dowling turned to look at him, and a burning desire to rescue him from the precipice just in front of his stumbling steps took possession of his heart.

He paused and then walked on again, as he said to Henry:

"Oh, what a pity that the saloon is permitted to ruin so many of our best young men. That poor fellow, even in his drunkenness, is marked with refinement, and I imagine came from a good home, possibly even religious influence. But what can a

man do for him? Nothing, to-night. I would stop and talk to him and do anything to help him. That is the way I feel now, but you might as well talk to a piece of wood or block of stone——"

"Perhaps better," interrupted Henry, "because he would probably only insult you and swear at you."

"Yes, and I wish to Heaven that we could do something to prevent these stations along the road to perdition from transacting their awful business," said Mr. Dowling. "It is a disgrace to our civilization and an outrage upon humanity. These places ruin more young men in one night than my church saves in five years. They are also the greatest enemy of the workingman."

Just then Grace paused at the foot of a dark stairway.

"I have been here before," she said; "don't be afraid. Follow me, and they will be glad to see us, I know."

She went on until she reached the second floor, and rapped upon the door at the head of the stairs.

A woman opened it, and appeared surprised for a moment—not at seeing Grace, because she knew her —but at her companions.

The woman was only about thirty years of age. She carried a careworn and almost discouraged look. In every feature was the mark of trouble deep cut.

The smile had disappeared, evidently never to return.

Oh, the tragedy of such a life!

She had married with brightest prospects of a happy future in a home of her own. The years had come freighted with a great load of struggle and opposition. They had tried hard and honestly to make a living for themselves and their two children, but now her husband was in one of their two rooms, suffering not only the pain physical, but the greatest pangs of the soul also.

Despair was thrusting its blade into his heart. The world was dark. It was midnight all the time. He could want himself, but to see his wife and children lack the very necessities of life was more than he could bear. Death would be a relief, but he was not a coward, and suicide did not even suggest itself to him. But just what they were to do, he did not know.

Grace in her own way changed the atmosphere of their poor home into a welcome for herself and her friends.

She told them she came simply to inquire about Mr. Robbins, and that she wanted him to know her pastor, and also Miss Fielding's brother.

It was a poor substitute for a home, and that sacred name ought not to be given to such places. Here human beings could only exist, not live.

The children were asleep together upon an old lounge, and the curtain between the two rooms had been drawn aside, so that the father could be seen, while Grace stood midway between the rooms, and Mr. Dowling had gone to the bedside and asked what the trouble was.

Grace knew the sad story, and she helped him tell it.

He had been employed by the street car company to take the place of one of the strikers, and was on his last trip for the night. The car had almost reached the terminus of the road.

Every passenger was out. He and the conductor were alone, when suddenly from a place in the shadow of the electric light a brick was hurled and broke the headlight, while almost at the same instant another had come with better aim, and struck him on the right shoulder.

He had turned the handle almost enough to stop the car when the first crash came, thinking that something had exploded under the car, and was just realizing what had taken place and getting ready to turn on the power again and escape, when the blow, as from a bolt of lightning, paralyzed his arm and side, so that he could not move.

He had almost fallen, but was up again, unable to lift his hand, or do anything, and the car came to a standstill. It all happened so quickly that his companion had not reached the front of the car before it

was surrounded by angry men. They seized him and dragged him over the inclosure, and beat him with a half dozen blows at once. They called him "scab" and "tramp" and cursed him, and left him on the hard pavement, more dead than alive.

Help was soon there, and employees and policemen had scattered the strikers after a battle, in which seven had been injured and one man shot by an officer.

They were determined to break the car, and had succeeded in its ruin before they fled. When Mr. Robbins recovered sufficiently, he was carried into his poor home about twelve o'clock at night.

The feelings of his broken-hearted wife, after waiting weeks for employment, could not be described. Death itself would have been a relief for either one, and that night they imagined that even the children would be better off without them.

He said now to Mr. Dowling:

"Don't think that I blame the strikers. I don't know what to say about it. I didn't want to take the job. It was a case of necessity. I must steal, starve, beg or take the risk of their threats. They warned us often enough. They ought to have better pay and shorter hours. They ought not to work seven days in the week. They are right. I would rather be called anything else in the world than a

'scab.' I am on their side, and I felt guilty every turn I gave the electric motor. The company can get men enough—poor sticks, most of them—but they don't ask any odds of the old and faithful employees. I did it for the sake of my wife and babies, and here I am. I wouldn't do it again. I will stand by my fellow workmen. Better for a man to starve than to be a slave."

The man was so earnest and almost excited that Mr. Dowling had to interrupt him in order to get an opportunity to say anything, but "Mr. Robbins," he said, "it certainly cannot be right for one man to pound another. There is no law or liberty in that. That is barbarism, and not Americanism."

"Yes," said he, "but what will the men do? I step in and run their cars for the same old wages or less, and then their families suffer. It is only a change of people, that is all, and the condition remains the same."

Mr. Dowling did not know what to say for an instant, but ventured:

"Yes, but it must be wrong, and I hope some other way can be found."

"So do I," said he, "and I hope they will find the way for all men to earn an honest living."

"The rule is," said Mr. Dowling, "that men do have a way, but I suppose there are exceptions. Most of

the needy people are to blame themselves, or their ancestors."

"But I——"

"Wait a minute," continued Mr. Dowling. "I don't say that you are to blame, only that I think that there are not many exceptions to the rule in this great city."

"Yes, more than you think, and it makes a man almost believe there is no right and no God, or anything like I used to think."

"Hold on, there is a God and He is caring for you. Out of all these troubles and reverses there will come some good and a speedy relief."

"It has been a long time coming," said he. "There must be something wrong with either society or with me. Perhaps it is with me, but I know it is not with Mary and the babies," and then the great tears rolled down his face.

Grace took a step nearer to him, and said:

"Now, you know me, and you will not starve. Just cheer up, and there will be a better day."

"Yes," spoke out Henry, "I am in with the workingmen, and perhaps I can help you in some way. I have not much, but here is two dollars for you tonight," and he laid it on the table by the hand of Mrs. Robbins.

David Dowling had been in many a dilemma in his life, but at no time more so than now. He wanted

to say and do the helpful thing, but he did not know what it was.

That is the old problem for the earnest soul.

At last he took hold of the man's hand, and said:

"I am your friend, and I will see you again. I will pray for you when I am not here, but I would like to pray for you now. God does live, and He lives for you. Trust Him. I have been in the dark, too—not just as you are now, but in another way, and just as dark for me. I can sympathize, but there is no relief —only in God. Do you want me to pray?"

It was not a very hearty reply which came from the sick man, but he half whispered, "Yes, I would like to have you."

They all kneeled, and one of the most earnest prayers arose from those poor surroundings. It seemed as if Christ was there. It was so much like some of His work when upon earth.

One minister was coming to learn the art of the Christ—coming to receive the joy and satisfaction of Christ.

They had tarried so much longer than Grace expected, and most of the evening had passed already, but they hastened on another block and a half, and stood in front of a dilapidated old building of five stories in height, with a very narrow stairway to reach the upper floors.

Grace said: "Here is another one of my families. I want you to see them."

"I am afraid it is too late," replied Mr. Dowling, as he looked at his watch, and said: "It is almost nine o'clock."

"Oh, that won't make any difference. I am sure we can find her," answered Grace. "She sews half the night, and I want you to see how some people have to work."

They were already on their way up the stairs, and Henry called out to the leader to ask if there was no end to the climb, or if they were ascending an Eifel tower.

When they reached the fifth floor, the single roomed home was opened for them, but it was almost too crowded to receive them all.

A small woman, with bright but worn appearance, arose from her sewing machine as her child of twelve years opened the door, and told her that Miss Chalmers was there.

She could not understand the late visit, or the coming of so many, until Grace had explained it by saying that she wanted her to know Mr. Dowling and her other friends, who could not come any other time, and this was later than they had planned, but she added:

"I knew you would be at work, and would not mind the hour, or so many of us coming, either."

There were only two chairs, and another with the back broken, also a lounge, which another child of eight years occupied.

They could not all sit down if they had desired to do so, but that was not necessary now, and Grace said she need not apologize, because they would not sit down if she had twice as many chairs. They must not stay, only a moment or two.

It was a room, clean, but oh, so small and close and poorly lighted. It was ruin to eyes and health to work so many hours each day in a place like that, and then to sleep in it for the few remaining hours of the night.

The dream which many people in the great city have concerning heaven is that there will be room enough. So crowded here, "room" is another name for heaven in the tenements.

David Dowling and Henry Fielding stood speechless, and had each his own thoughts and feelings, but they were not so very far apart.

Grace was explaining to them that this woman had cared for her husband in this same room for two years, while he was dying daily of consumption, and that she was such a hero that she not only looked after him, but supported the little family and paid the rent. The doctor did not come very often, but even he had never lost a farthing by her.

"I do not see how it is possible," said Henry.

"Well, she is doing the same now. Tell them, Mrs. Mason, how much you get for your sewing."

The color in her face deepened, and she hesitated for a moment, but then said:

"Well, I am almost ashamed of it."

"You need not be the one to be ashamed," said Grace. "The people who make you do it for them are the guilty ones."

"Yes," said Henry, "and society ought to make them blush more than it does."

"I am thankful," she replied, "to get it at all. It is my living now, and I don't know what I would do if they stopped me."

"What do they pay you?" queried Mr. Dowling.

He was afraid she was forgetting to tell them, and he was anxious to know and hear the story of a poor sewing woman, first hand and for himself.

She looked up at him and said: "I am making vests now, and I get for my work on them six cents apiece. I can make five of them in the day, and if I work at night until twelve o'clock, I can make eight. Sometimes Minnie and I work until later than that, and make ten. She does what work is done here about the room and the cooking. Of course, that is not very much, and then we work together. I furnish my own thread and machine. Fifty cents, sir, is a good day for us, and we are ready to sleep on that. I make cheap trousers, too, and get for them

one dollar and a half a dozen pair. ´It takes me almost three days for a dozen."

Mr. Dowling never moved his eyes from the woman's face.

He was almost transfixed at hearing such a revelation of the real truth, and seeing it all for himself. He could not help feeling that there were many wrongs to be righted in the present system, and that his Gospel must have a bearing upon it.

"But you know," she continued, "we are glad and anxious to get it at that price. Many women right in this tenement would be willing to take my work if they could get it, and some of them, too, would do it for less."

"I don't know who is to be blamed," said Henry. "I hope that it will be better for you, anyway, very soon. I work every day, and work hard, but I am sure that I do not know yet what you know about it."

"I wanted you to know," said Grace, "that you had friends, and we will not forget you, will we?" she asked, with a glance and turn toward them all.

They all nodded, and Elsie asked if there was anything she needed now especially.

The woman would not own that there was, and said they were getting along very comfortably.

They all bade her good-night, with the assurance of their friendship and interest in her, and promised to come again.

Some money had been left on the table without a word, and Christ whispered "inasmuch" again.

Another life and family had been touched by real Christianity. Less toil that night, and sweeter rest—some light through the cloud.

Mr. Dowling remarked with a sigh, as they reached the last step of the stairway:

"One half of the world does not know how the other half lives."

"Unquestionably," said Henry, as they passed on toward the car.

"Much of the poverty and suffering comes directly and indirectly from sin, but we have seen at least some to-night which apparently does not. Yes," continued Mr. Dowling, "it has been a revelation to me. Christ would have been helping this class of people more than I have, and I am going to do my part in the future. I do not believe that any man knows the real Christ-life who simply preaches to a rich congregation, and is satisfied with that. My life in the ministry has not been satisfactory to myself. I have had many a thought of going out of it, and other unholy suggestions. It is just because I have not gone at it in the Christ way."

He almost stopped as he said:

"Henry Fielding, these have been wonderful weeks in my life. It seems as if I had lived years in these

days. I have been praying that it might be the same with you."

Henry looked at him, and replied:

"Your prayer has been answered."

They were about to part, and Mr. Dowling said:

"I have my sermon for next Sunday. You will have to be there."

CHAPTER IX.

A HERO IN THE PULPIT.

David Dowling was more truthful than his conscience made him believe, after he parted from his friends. He had said to them that the experience of the evening had given him his sermon for the next Sunday.

While that statement was not literally true in letter, period and comma, yet it was the very heart of the truth.

He had his sermon for Sunday morning planned before this, and was ready to announce it in the paper and church bulletin the next morning, but now it was charged with new life. It was practically a new sermon. He must change it and fill it in and preach it entirely different from the original plan.

Most of the time in his life when he had mapped out and written his sermon, he laid it away to rest sweetly until Sunday morning, and hardly awakened it long enough for a half hour's sensation in the church, and then usually it went to eternal rest.

Now it was his own blood and own heart which was to make the sermon. It was the result of a holy compulsion.

He had convictions and consecration, but they were more than sentences and words.

"I must—and I ought," were more than many sentences to him now.

They had enlarged into the most important words in his vocabulary.

The great strike had continued in the city, and it had come to the hour when everybody was being affected by it, and intensely interested in it.

He said: "The Church is one of the places, if not the first place, in which to discuss it, and help to furnish the remedy. If this does not vitally affect the Kingdom of God, I would like to know what does. Christ had something to say about the most important elements in the society of His day, and I am His representative to-day. God helping me, I will bring the light of the Gospel into this darkness, and the peace of Jesus into this strife between capital and labor."

This righteous resolution was being carried into effect each day of the week by most earnest prayer and preparation.

The announcement of his intention had spread among his own people, and among the union men. Most of them who did not know him only said: "Oh, he is on the side of his parishioners, and will only touch the surface of it, and will leave the men to suffer the same injustice."

There was excitement in the church, because two of the officials in one of the street car companies were members of his church, and several other people who were regular attendants at the service, were known to own stock in the railroads of the city.

The building was crowded when the hour for the Sunday morning service arrived, and some were going away rather than stand up the whole hour.

There was a cry which only angels and the ear of God heard this morning in the pastor's room just as the organ began to play and the choir to take their places.

"Oh, God, help me to be true to Thee, and to every man this morning, even if it costs my position or my life."

And then a man appeared on the platform, whose face shone like the faces of his companions in the private room.

Those who had known him best and longest said they had never seen him look so noble and almost divine.

A clear, courageous conscience changes any man's face.

What is it but the index of the soul?

The most interested and attentive listener was Henry Fielding, and, strange to say, he heard scarcely any of the opening service. He was otherwise engaged. Prayer became a reality to him again. He

was buttressing and barricading the sermon and making it a mighty fortress of power. That is largely the strength in the sermon.

You can plant the seed in a cave, and not have flower or fruit. The sermon is planted, but needs the warmth and light of sunshine and necessary environment.

After a pause, which brought perfect quiet all over the building and arrested attention, David Dowling arose, walked to the edge of the platform, and stood one side of the pulpit, with his hand on the open Bible.

At any other time he would have trembled and found his introduction the hardest part of the sermon. Now he seemed conscious of the presence of Christ, and recognized that he was simply his mouthpiece. He raised his hand slowly, and then dropped it upon the Bible again, as he said:

"Here is the constitution for every labor union, and the only rule of life for every employer. The question which I am to discuss this morning is of vital import to society and the Church, and the Kingdom of God. While I propose to speak unhesitatingly the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, I will not intentionally be personal, but want it to have its application to my own life as well as to that of every other man.

"I understand the union man and his object better

than I ever did. I have seen the sufferings of the poor more than I ever have. I am convinced of certain injustices in modern society and the duty of the Church of Jesus Christ to assist in making the wrong right. We cannot be silent beholders of oppression in any form, and the ravages of selfishness without bringing upon ourselves just condemnation, and making our precious Gospel to lose the last vestige of power over the individual and his society. I would give my very blood at this instant if I could only show the spirit of Christ through His Church, to every workingman in this city.

"We are nearer right and nearer to His cause than they think, but we are not all up to the point where the Saviour of man stands.

"If the Gospel in the heart of the employer does not kill selfishness, I will never preach it again."

There was an evident effect produced by this sentence, and after a pause, Mr. Dowling continued:

"Understand me, I did not say that it did not have that effect, and that there are not genuine Christian employers. There are many of them, but I do declare that that is what the Gospel does do for every man who has the right to be a member of the Church.

"Before I proceed with the sermon, I must tell you what my eyes saw this last week, and if I could, I would reveal to you what my heart felt."

Then he gave the audience a vivid and touching

picture of the scenes in the homes of the poor, and told the sorrow of the man who had been called "scab" and injured, and yet did not blame the men who had beaten him. As he finished the pathetic account, some handkerchiefs were seen, and some members were nodding to each other.

One man, who was presumably a union man, and sat near the door, spoke out in a subdued and almost frightened tone, "He is right."

Mr. Dowling gave no heed to any movements or sound, but went on to say:

"There is no question before the public more important than this one. It has so many radii reaching out from its centre to the very circumference of society. Discussion of it is valuable, but the day has dawned for Christian activity.

"In our greatest prosperity there are thousands in want of food and clothing. Thousands who are honest and industrious. They may not have great ability, but they are not lazy, nor are they criminals.

"Witness every strike we have in these great cities. Why are they nearly always ineffectual and result in greater loss to the employees? Because there are waiting ten times as many men as are needed to take their places. A strike has come to be almost of no avail, unless it is backed up by force, and then we cry 'outlaws' and 'criminals,' 'barbarism,' 'ought not to succeed.'

"And this is also true, that most of the men who do come to take the places of the strikers are simply willing to take their lives in their hands in order to feed their wives and starving children. They are not rushing into this hazardous work because they like its danger or find pleasure in the labor. It is often not even to earn wages for themselves, but the sublime struggle and sacrifice for others. What will the workingmen do under existing conditions? Is it right to strike? Does the strike furnish the remedy? Every man who is a patriot or a Christian ought to help furnish an answer to these questions.

"What will the man or body of men subjugated to oppression do? There is a real question in the world of labor. It is not all imaginary. It is the most vital element in our city's life now. If there is want of work and want of justice, something is wrong somewhere.

"It is not caused by the introduction of new machinery. At the first reception of new machines there is a displacement of labor, and oftentimes with such rapidity that much hardship results. Then comes strikes and the destruction of property. But all the history of this tells one story, that within a short period of time several men are employed in the place of every man deprived of work by these victories of inventive genius. Every time society gets a service rendered with less of human effort, blessing immeas-

ureable results. No man can trace its ramifications through society.

"Stage drivers and hostlers and waiters and farmers lose occupation when the stage coach is stopped, but that number has been multiplied a thousand times by the vast number of railroad employees, and at far better wages. Progress means new demand, but patience must be exercised. After the machine has done its momentary work and apparent injury, the years pass on to bless it. Nor is the present condition of want of food and want of work due to the poor country in which we live. There is an abundance for all. There is enough in this rich land for more than one hundred times as many in the family. We can waste a hundred million of dollars a year in tobacco and one billion, five hundred million a year in rum, and just here is the great burden of sin upon the workingmen. The larger part of that enormous expenditure and worse than waste is from his scanty store. He is guilty, and he has suffered the penalty. By economy and temperance the workingman could save and become independent, and perhaps employers themselves. If one man drinks up his money, he ought not to curse the other man who saves it. Let every man bear his own just share of the responsibility. The workingman ought to rise up against this startling waste and sin. He ought to declare it as his greatest enemy and fight it to the death.

"Neither is the present condition produced by the influx of foreign labor. This is not great enough as a factor. The poor and unskilled labor has been hindered, and it should be. The incompetent and criminal element of old world population should not be permitted to land on these shores to take the places of skilled and faithful men by accepting less pay.

"Blame the laboring man as you will, I say he must protect his wages. That is one purpose of his union, and it is not a fault. His skill and his reward are his property. Why not insure it and protect it? It is more sacred property than real estate or the steel rails of street car companies. He ought to use every legitimate means to keep it.

"What right has a street car company to thrust a faithful employee's wages down and increase his hours of toil, and do it by the force of placing the lives of our citizens in the keeping of another ignorant and careless man who turns an electric motor for less pay? This is the problem, but it is not the supreme factor or the real producing cause. Neither has the monopoly or combination of the present day as tyrannical a power over man and society as many have supposed. They have lessened the working forces in some directions, but have increased it in others, and in time there will arise out of these changes now new demands.

"They cannot do as they please, nor charge what

they will. The element of competition has not been silenced. The moment the price is raised where there is a profit in it for others, many will grasp the opportunity. Labor was practically in the same condition and struggle before this new feature in the social world.

"I read yesterday the writing of one prominent union man, who said: 'The promised prosperity has arrived—the genuine, unadulterated article; and how the capitalists rejoice. But the wage slaves! Oh, they are not to be considered, only as so many tools or machines that are only fit to toil and support the idle capitalist when it seems to be the most profitable. Workingmen, do you realize that you and your class are the only ones who can and will give yourselves any better conditions? Strike the capitalist intrenchment in its weakest point. Capitalism or private ownership is wholly responsible for all the vice, crime, misery, want and servitude of the masses. Strong men willing to work starve while gazing on stores of food which is controlled for private interest. Little children go to bed hungry, while capitalists are feeding on luxuries they never earned. The miner digs into the bowels of the earth, hid away in a dungeon, toiling out his own life, scarcely seeing the light of day, to support a class who never aid in production, but feast on the blood and sweat that has been coined into dollars. Get rid at least of

the superstition that there would be no capital if there were no capitalists, for it is this absurd notion which keeps you in bondage; which makes each of you look beggingly to some capitalist for employment instead of looking fraternally to each other for mutual service in co-operation.'

"He writes extravagantly and does injury to his own cause. That is not the right method to pursue, nor is the cure presented, only in a vague and hackneyed way. There is something deeper than that. Many wise men and true hearts have advocated the public ownership of public utilities. That would prevent the repetition of this present situation. This is undoubtedly true in a measure, and I wish it was in effect to-day, but that only touches the public utilities, and leaves out the general condition and great question.

"No city ought to be subjugated to the inconvenience and injustice of a street car strike. That affects other people more in some instances than it does the corporation or their employees. Our rights and liberties must be considered. Light, water, postal, telegraph and transportation services ought to be under Government control. The crime of the past is the cause of the penalty to-day. We give away valuable franchises and hundreds of millions of acres of land, and these days are the result. Here are the most frequent and bitterest strikes, and it ought never to have been

possible. The old world is ahead of us, and the governments are making great revenue from the very things in which the individuals and corporations in this country are hoarding their millions.

"This is not the extreme of socialism. It is only good government and good sense. Even in the present position, no strike should be possible in these departments of our life and commerce. Here at least we could have a permanent court of arbitration, whose power was final. Our business should be established upon the principle of our Government. There we have a king, but he is controlled; there we have the people, but they are not a mob. Both are governed as well as governing.

"In the case of the capitalist, he is a most important element in our society. In proportion to his goodness is his value. The workingmen are just as valuable to society, and we have a multitude of the best in the world. The good capitalist, like a good king, is one of the greatest blessings, if he does not oppress his fellowmen, and is willing to divide reasonably the profits with his employees, and surrounds his factory or men or railroad with an atmosphere of brotherhood and love. He may be a benefactor, indeed, but if he is a bad man, he is like the king who becomes simply a tyrant on his throne.

"So the workingmen are the very sinew of our life. They are now the lower class. They are on a level

with the best. Every citizen ought to be a workingman in the best definition of that term. If the workingman is industrious and honest and economical, and possesses ability, he is not only a necessity, but one of the greatest elements of wealth in our society. Neither employer or employee ought to rule this country unguarded. That is contrary to every principle of the Republic. You make kings and create mobs to your shame and your death. We have individual liberty, bounded by law. It is almost an outrage to put in the hands of any one man or corporation the interests of a whole city.

"In this present crisis I am impressed with the certainty of the men being in the right. They have been oppressed for months and years by an increase in their hours of toil, with no rest-day in the week, as God ordained, and as every man has the right to possess. More than that, there has now been made a slight reduction in wages. It is the hour for a strike, if no other power will secure justice. Why is all this increase of hours and lowering of wages? Is it because the stockholders are growing poorer? No, their dividends are increasing and they are growing richer every day. It is only the process of selfishness.

"Forgive me if there is any offense, but I must speak the truth, even though I die in the utterance. Do I advocate a strike? No, it ought to be the last resort. The workingmen may have made the mistake

of taking this last means too hastily. After everything else has failed, what is there for the men to do, if not to strike?

"We are coming nearer the day when arbitration will settle these disputes. That is the next great epoch in the history of labor, but until that hour, I know of no other procedure than that which is adopted. I am not prepared to say how it shall be conducted. I don't think there should be force used to the bodily injury of other men, nor should there be the destruction of property. I am convinced that the end would be attained and public sympathy aroused more quickly by the right and lawful way.

"Public opinion is the great force to keep upon your side. You must lose if you lose that. You forfeit that by undue haste or lawlessless.

"Now, I am afraid that some of you have disagreed with me, and perhaps may be even offended at me, but both employers and employees listen. Be calm and fair. Hear me through. I do not stand for my own opinions this morning. I stand for the thoughts and purposes of Jesus Christ. What are the great principles which he came to introduce into the world of business and labor? Both sides must abide by his decision. You cannot escape it, for even the judgment throne of God is governed by the Gospel.

"A distinguished statesman, who now holds the high office of associate justice of the Supreme Court

of the United States, said recently: 'You ministers are making a fatal mistake in not holding forth before men, as prominently as the previous generation did, the retributive justice of God. You have fallen into a sentimental style of rhapsodizing over the love of God, and you are not appealing to that fear of future punishment which your Lord and Master made such a prominent element in His preaching. And we are seeing the effects of it in the widespread demoralization of private virtue and corruption of public conscience throughout the land.' And an authority higher than any statesman or jurist has said: 'I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him who, when He hath killed the body, hath power to cast both soul and body into hell.' It is a sad and awful truth that sin kills beyond the tomb. To hide this truth from men by cowardly silence is disloyalty to Him who hath called men to preach His Gospel.

"The judgment is a part of the Gospel, and every man must face it. The capitalist will answer for every dollar that he has made, and the laborer will answer for every strike he has inaugurated or in which he has engaged.

"I have said once that Christ would belong to a labor union. I have no reason now to change that declaration. At least, if he would not belong to it, I ought not and you should not. Neither do I see any reason why Christ could not be an employer, but the

same divine principle would control his acts in either place.

"It is selfishness, pure and unadulterated, which is at the source of misunderstandings and quarrels between capital and labor. We are willing that Christ should reign in the Church on Sunday, but not willing that he should rule in our lives on Monday.

"Men are not controlled by Christ's law of service and sacrifice seven days in the week. We talk about progress in the world. There is no progress apart from unity. We must all keep together, and no man be left behind. That is both philosophy and religion —yes, it is the fact itself. The hovels of the poor are not far from the palace gates. Dives and Lazarus are blood relatives. Leave one part of the city in ignorance and want, and the other part in progress? Never. We move, but we must all keep together. That is the principle of every word upon the lips of Christ, and every act in his life. This is the brotherhood of man; this is the fatherhood of God; this is the triumph of the Gospel; this is the programme of Christianity. The Golden Rule is not a farce, but a glorious possibility and reality. The end of all this must be Christian arbitration. Strikes are dangerous and injurious, if not altogether wrong and contrary to our Christian and political principles. There ought to be some other way, and there must be. What is in store for factories and places of business and homes, and even

the Church, if a mob of people using lynch law shall triumph? What is in future for men if the railroad corporation succeeds without arbitration? It would be perilous to the best interests of us all to have them meet with success and force men to work for less than they earn.

"Would to God a court of arbitration could be established on Christian principles, and the impulse would push the world rapidly nearer the throne of God. Would to God that you employers here to-day could take hold of the pierced hand of Christ, and ask Him to lead you. Do not hesitate. Make the venture—dare to face duty. It is right, it is the only right; your eternity is in it. Make your Christianity real. Show it to these men—yes, show Christ to them. That is your first business. Give them justice—aye, more than that—give them sacrifice or you do not share in Calvary.

"Oh, you men who are in the labor unions of the city, whether in the street car strike or not, hearken to me. This is not rhetoric now. This is my blood. Give Jesus Christ a chance in your life. Your employers may not be all to blame. Is your record in relation to them perfectly clean? Have you always done unto them as you would that they should do to you? Stand up like a man against every wrong method, and only do what you know the Carpenter of Nazareth would do in your place. Make the Gospel prac-

tical. It can be. It was intended for your union and your toil. Christ wants you; the Church wants you; I want you—every man of you, to give your hearts to the Lord Jesus and serve Him.

"The only remedy for labor and all trouble is His Divine Spirit in the hearts of individual men. Christ saved society, but, man, he must first save you."

There was perfect silence in the great audience for a half minute after Mr. Dowling finished.

Then the services closed in almost the same quiet, and few tarried to speak with each other. The impression was so great. The burning conviction of a true man had entered the hearts of every listener.

The preacher went immediately to his room, and wondered, but was satisfied. Duty done is the author of peace in the soul.

Within two months, twenty-nine members of the labor union had accepted Christ as their Saviour, and became members of David Dowling's church.

CHAPTER X.

HENRY FIELDING'S CONVERSION.

In the last meeting of Union No. 10 there had been a most earnest desire manifested to do the right thing. More so than ever before. Now the business and discussion were more personal, and yet the men were more conservative and charitable than in the past. Most of them were not conscious of it, but it was plainly manifest. Some new power had control, and they were breathing a purer air.

The question now was not one of strikes in general or concerning the street car strike now going on, but it was their own interest and their own families which were to suffer. They were sure of the lockout. It had passed beyond the boundaries of threat and was assuming a distinct form of reality.

Most of the men were undecided. They wanted to be independent and heroic enough to fight and starve if necessary, but their case was not altogether a clear one. There were two sides to it, and they were honest enough not to desire to ignore that, and close their eyes willfully to the rights of their employers.

The rabid enthusiast was heard many times during the meeting that night. A decision must be made

and the narrow vision could only see one way. Throw down the challenge and go into battle without counting the cost, or placing the cause into the scales and taking time to let it balance?

Never had they held such a meeting in the display of true manhood. It was not a radical, unreasonable, unjust denunciation of the men who employed them, but a spirit of nobility and desire to come to a righteous reconciliation.

The rule is that there is only one result to that feeling in the soul, whether in factory or home, Church or State, on earth or in heaven. There may be exceptions, but the rule remains.

That meeting, long to be remembered by every man who was there, lasted until twelve o'clock at night, with the victorious result of the appointment of a committee, consisting of Henry Fielding, James Watts and the Rev. David Dowling, to go at once to the employers and strive to adjust the affair satisfactorily to both sides.

The conclusion had been reached that it was more misunderstanding than fault on either side. It was the new way of doing it, but it was unquestionably the right way.

If war is ever righteous anywhere, it can only be so as the last resort in securing justice. There is a better way first. This was that better way.

It was a new experience for David Dowling again,

but he was not the man to hesitate now. He had passed that, and was rather anxious to serve the workingmen in any possible way, and this had been one of the dreams of the past weeks: "Why not the preacher, the man supposed to be nearest Christ, act as a peacemaker?" he had asked himself, and they did not know it, but he was ready for the opportunity to try this Christ method in labor disputes, as well as in every other place.

The very next morning, as soon as the information reached him, he went to the factory, and at noontime the three entered the private office by appointment for the conference.

The conversation was almost too sacred to be repeated.

The revelation of kindness and good intent was beyond their expectation. Neither the members of the firm, nor the superintendent displayed any ill feeling, much less any anger.

They said they would rather keep their old men, but only insisted in running their own business in their own way, which they would guarantee them was always in the interests of their employees, as well as themselves. They tried to make it plain that the introduction of new machinery was essential to success there, and even to the keeping of the factory running. They had to be up with the times. It was a case of necessity, and not selfishness. Quality and

quantity of work must be turned out, and where it changed the hands about, and in some cases demanded a less number, it would in the end result for the good of all.

They finally agreed to keep them all, at least for the present, and see what the future demanded.

One of the employers spoke up and said:

"I don't honestly believe that I want to see your families suffer any more than I do my own. I am willing to sacrifice for the good of every faithful man in this factory, but you don't know how I have passed my nights this last year. I have worked all my life up to this point, and it looked dark many days at noonday. We have made just half this year what we made two years ago. Of course, it is not our business to tell our men all that, but not one of them has lost a dollar of his wages this year, even if I have lost a part of that which I gave my whole life to secure."

His partner interrupted, and said:

"Yes, I have wished sometimes that I was one of the men in our employ instead of having this load on my hands."

Henry explained the position of the men as best he could, and said it looked so much different from their standpoint, but he believed every man of them, when the report was returned, would do the right thing,

and would be more content in the future—at least, not so quick to condemn.

Mr. Dowling told them of his confidence in the victory of the Christ spirit. While they might not be members of the Church, it nevertheless remained true everywhere that the principles and example of the Saviour of men were destined to triumph. They need not fear them, nor regard them as something foreign to a labor union or a factory. It was the very intent of the Gospel to settle all these things for the good of all.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I never felt so much in my life the possibility of bringing the Christ into all the relations of life, and sweetening them by His divine influence. I used to preach a Gospel. I am now going to preach *the* Gospel—yes, and practice it, too, God help me."

There were three men in the firm, but only one of them was a Christian. Not a word was said, but if silence ever gave consent it was at that moment. Every man in the room was saying in the secret quiet of his own soul, "There is a better way—this is it."

Misunderstanding and misrepresentation are twin demons standing between capital and labor and working night and day in their diabolical efforts to bring up the forces of either side in battle array. A calm consideration and a Christian charity would settle

almost every contention and strife in the industrial world. Wise and unselfish arbitration would change the whole aspect of each individual case by itself, and the whole horizon of the world of labor—yes, it would drive every cloud from the sky, and heaven's own blue would reflect a world of peace and love.

Union No. 10 had learned its greatest lesson in an hour of sublimest experience. Their employers discovered their fault and made most sacred promises. The relations were never so harmonious, and the contentment was never so sweet.

The next Sunday evening two of the firm and the superintendent were in Mr. Dowling's church, revealing their respect for him, and appreciation of his action in behalf of the men. They did not condemn him for coming in the committee of the men, but honored him for it, and wanted to hear him. They had said to each other: "He is a manly fellow, different from some ministers. He does not live in his pulpit. He lives among men. He is not one of your droning, sniveling specimens. He is alive."

That was the very Sunday evening when one of the greatest manifestations of the power of the Divine Spirit of God's direct answer to prayer were given to David Dowling.

It had been a simple Gospel sermon about the young man who had kept the whole law, and to whom Christ said, "One thing thou lackest." He was dra-

matic in his style, and his picture of this scene and a demonstration of Christ's anxiety and love for the noble fellow was most vivid.

When he came to the tragedy of the scene, where the young man would not surrender, and went away in sorrow, it seemed as if everybody in the building could see the very event itself.

One of Mr. Dowling's hearers saw himself in his morality going away from Christ, and in sorrow, too. It was Henry Fielding. He was saying to himself:

"It is myself, it is myself. That is just what I have done; I am doing it to-night. Why not give up?—I am in the wrong."

A hundred times the same thoughts and convictions shot through his very soul. He tried to drive them away, or at least not let his feelings be apparent to any one else.

Immediately after the service, Grace came up to him, and with the same expression of delight to meet him, she said:

"Oh, was not that a splendid sermon? How striking the picture!"

Henry had moved a half-dozen times while she was saying only those few words, but not away from her. He hastened to make some response about her father's health, as he had been ill for some time.

She answered him, but was too much interested in something else just then. She came to say it.

She hesitated. She said, "I will," and then looked into his face, and said:

"Mr. Fielding, I wish you were a Christian."

Henry was never so bewildered in his life. He did not expect it from her. He could not just realize it. He did not know what to say. He turned his head away for a second, and then looked in her eyes, only to discover a tear.

It was a more brilliant and valuable jewel than the diamonds in her ears, or the ruby upon her fingers. What could he say? There was only one thing to say.

If he would be honest before a girl who dared to do that, and before the girl whom he even dared to love, he must say only the one thing.

In a partial whisper, he replied:

"I wish I was, too, but do not talk about it to-night. You have said enough," he continued.

Just then, in the plan of God, Elsie appeared, and said:

"Henry, are you most ready to go?"

"I am afraid not yet. I wonder if you could not go alone to-night, sister. I want to see Mr. Dowling before I go, and I do not know how long I shall be."

"Certainly," said she.

"I will see her half way," said Grace.

"Yes, we will take care of each other," added Elsie.

Henry turned away as if anxious to go, and very nervous in every movement.

"I wonder what he wants of Mr. Dowling to-night," said Elsie.

"Never mind," answered Grace, "you let them go. I think I know."

"I can guess what you mean; I am so glad. Do you mean that he wants to talk to Mr. Dowling about becoming a Christian?" asked Elsie.

"Yes, that's just it, and we will both pray for him. I know it will be all right," said Grace, with a mingling of earnestness and joy.

Henry had already approached Mr. Dowling, and before he had opportunity to make his desire known, the warm hand of the preacher had grasped his, and the warm heart had gone out after him again, as often before, and now the direction of the Spirit was heeded, and he said:

"Henry, I was preaching to you to-night. Christ loves you. You were that young man, moral and good, but you are going away from Jesus, and I know you are not happy, either. Why not make the surrender? You know what is right—do it, and do it right away. If you have faults to find with me and the Church, forget them now. You cannot find any fault with Christ."

Mr. Dowling was going on in his enthusiastic ex-

hortation and plea, when Henry, with his eyes to the floor, interrupted, and said:

"I have not as much fault to find as formerly. You can depend upon that. I was mostly in the wrong—I did not understand. Yes, I did not understand myself, nor you, nor the Church, nor Christ, nor anything else, as I should. I look at it differently now."

"I am so glad to hear that," said Mr. Dowling. "Come into my room for a moment, won't you?"

"Yes," said Henry, in a manly, determined tone of voice.

As they walked toward the door of his room, Mr. Dowling said:

"I am very tired to-night, but I will stay here all night, Henry, if you will only give your heart to Christ."

When once the door closed behind them, and the key was turned in the lock, Henry Fielding felt that he had never really understood a minister.

What occurred ought to be only for angel vision. It was just like Christ with the young man, or Nicodemus in the night-time. They were both honest and earnest, and in such a case the result is inevitable.

Mr. Dowling simply opened his heart at the first, and told of the meaning and the power of Christ in

his own life. How temptation and sin swarmed around him, the same as any other man. He said:

"Henry, don't think that I live in a different world from yours; and that what is real to me, will not be so to you. You will have one enemy to fight, and I will have another, 'but His grace is sufficient.' You do not know what I pass through in battle, but I am determined to have a character at whatever cost to am determined to have a character at any cost, to anything else in my life. I used to be anxious for a reputation, and even was so low in my aim at one time that I wanted only a good salary, but all that is changed. I am crying to God every day to make me like Christ, and I will pay the price. This is always part of my prayer, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee, e'en though it be a cross that raiseth me.' I have even told Him to take my health, or loved ones, or anything, only leave me in the image and likeness of Christ. You do not know what a struggle is in my life. Just look at this one peril of the minister. He is so tempted to be jealous of the other men. You would think that might be the last fault. He ought to rejoice in the prosperity of every church and every preacher, but there is the difficulty. The other man has a larger audience, or more conversions, seemingly greater prosperity. Then jealousy mounts the throne of my heart, and demands my subjection. I have been a slave, but, God helping me, I never will

be again. This world is large enough for my neighbor and myself both, but the old and mean feeling keeps coming up when he seems to have the best, and the tendency to injure him pushes its foul self to the front. Now, Henry, some of these things may not seize you with such a relentless grip, and other things may be more powerful in your life. The enemy is there, facing us all with a boldness which only wickedness possesses, but I want you to know that Christianity is not only for the preacher, but for every man. I am first a man, and just like yourself."

Henry sat with eyes fastened apparently upon a picture hanging at the side of the room, but it was not there to him. It was all blank wall. He was listening to every word from the lips of one whom he respected most, and whose spirit was now making him seem nearer every moment.

He wanted to do right, and was an honest seeker after truth, but to him the new birth as yet seemed mysterious and unreal.

He was doing the best he could ,he thought, and what more does a new birth mean?

"Now," Mr. Dowling said, "there is one thing you lack."

"What is that?" asked he.

"That is conversion."

"Just what do you mean by that?" queried Henry.

"Except you be converted, and become as a little child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Yes; but what is conversion?"

"Only this, Henry. Convert means to turn around —face about. You have your eyes toward yourself and your own moral life, and even your sin. You must turn around and face Christ. That is all. Trust Him, love Him, and serve Him. One side of that great act is faith, and the other side is repentance. You repent of your sin, and you trust in Christ as your Saviour. Is that not simple? This is the meaning of Calvary to you. This is the divine plan of salvation for us all. You may not live much differently in the future outwardly, but you will live with a different disposition and a new spirit. It is just giving up to God's way, in sorrow, for all the sin of your life. Isn't that simplicity itself? The great mystery of the universe, and yet a child can understand how to say 'sorry' to God. I asked my little boy Will, eight years old, when he gave his heart to Jesus, and instantly he replied, 'Why, papa, ever since I first heard of Him.' Was not that beautiful? Why do not all men treat the Saviour like that?"

"Well, Mr. Dowling, I am ready, in as far as I know, to do it. This has been creeping over me for some weeks—in fact, ever since I first began coming to church, and I have been awake many times in the

night this last week, and have even tried to pray myself right."

"This is all, Henry; just this prayer now settles it for eternity: 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner, for Christ's sake.' That is coming to Christ, and that is going to heaven. 'He that believeth hath everlasting life.'"

They knelt at the same chair. The hand of Mr. Dowling rested on the farther shoulder of his companion, and great tears dropped from four eyes to the floor.

Angels carried the news to the city of God, and there was rejoicing around the throne.

Elsie was awake when Henry came in, but she was in her room, and refrained from telling him her joy, or asking the one important question. Never had her heart such an effort to control her lips, but she did, and it was best.

In the morning there was a strange occurrence. No, it was almost the ordinary one, but, alas, always unexpected.

Henry anticipated that everything was going better.

Elsie expected a new world, but the great tempter was planning his best work. He always does.

For the first time in a year, the alarm clock did not awaken Henry. In his excitement the night before, he had forgotten to wind it. When his eyes

opened in the morning, he was half an hour late. All things were in their wrong places, and haste only made waste.

Just before he was going away, Henry said something to his sister, which had in it only the shadow of unkindliness, but it was a sword as large as the one of Goliath thrust into her tender heart.

She could hardly control her feelings, and the door closed with more of a bang than usual, and he was gone.

Elsie sat down, and had it out the girl's way—a good cry was a relief.

Henry could have done the same, if he dared. He said:

"There can be no reality in what I did last night. I am not a Christian yet, or I would not have said that to her. She did not do anything. It was all my own fault, and I am glad that I did not tell her about my new life before I tried it."

Henry Fielding was in the warfare that they had talked about, and his enemy was doing his very best to conquer.

This was the last opportunity.

That was the longest and hardest day he ever had, but it was a day of victory, because he had stamped his foot a score of times, and said, "I will."

As soon as he entered their home that night, he

did not place his hat before he went to Elsie's side, and said in tenderest tones:

"Elsie, I want you to forgive me."

That was the greatest evidence of his conversion, but he did not realize it.

She sat down and had to cry again.

There was something else in it now, and when her brother attempted to comfort her, she only said: "Wait a minute, and I will tell you."

Then she told him of her happiness; that they were tears of deepest joy, because he had become a Christian. She knew it, even though he had not told her, and she said: "Your doing this, which you never did before, is the best proof. Your coming to me in this Christ-like way tells the whole story. Now, I can reveal another secret to you. I could not tell you before; I was afraid you would not bear it, as I know you will now. You can bear all things now through Christ, and I am sure this will be such a sorrow and disappointment to you. You have been so good to me, and such a noble brother. You have made so many sacrifices for me and my music lessons. I have done my best to learn, and you know how far I have advanced, especially with my last teacher, but every time your hard-earned money went to pay for the lessons, I felt as if I was guilty of a crime, and now this is the saddest part of it."

"I will bear it, and no care. What do you mean?"

he asked, as she made the slightest pause. "Tell me," he said, anxiously, as he rose and looked down at her.

"I have been waiting for weeks to tell you, and I don't want you to feel badly."

Then she held up her hand in front of him.

"What do you mean?" again he asked.

"Do you not see, Henry, how the two middle fingers are getting out of shape."

Henry looked puzzled, and asked again:

"Elsie, do you really mean that there is something the matter with your hand?"

"Yes, Henry; I have been to the doctors, and it has only been growing worse. It is rheumatism, and is coming in the other hand, too. They say it is in the joints, and this is the bitterest drop in the cup for me, that all your money and sacrifice have been thrown away."

"Now, Elsie, wait; this cannot all be as you think. Something can be done for it, I am sure."

"No, they all say the same thing, and I have been just as careful as I possibly could. I have tried everything, but it has all failed. I waited until I was sure before I told you. It increases slowly, but there is an increase all the time. I have not taken any lessons for two weeks. It is no use any more. I will be satisfied, Henry, if you will only bear the disappointment. I can stand anything now, since you are a

Christian. This is only a part of what Christ suffered for us both."

"You are the bravest, best girl in the world, worth a dozen others, and I shall never regret any gift to you; but I believe there is hope yet. We will try every remedy before we give up."

Henry did not realize it, but it was rheumatism, and Elsie's worst fears were to come to pass. She never played the piano after that night. The disease continued its ravages until she was crippled for life, but she was a queen among women, because of her Christian fortitude and faith.

She set a bright example for all the world who knew her.

Patience and trust, the sweetest, rested in every feature of her face, and in every move of her crippled form.

What a strange day this had been for Henry, the first day after his conversion. No, it was not strange; it was only part of real life. The bridge was built. This was the weight to test it, before the security was certain.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHASM BRIDGED.

One year and a part of the second has passed into the records of a Christian life, since Henry Fielding's conversion.

Never was there a more kingly attitude assumed in a man's relation to the Master of men than he carried into every part of his life. His spirit and courage won the admiration of all his fellow-workmen, and, during these short months, his influence had brought several of them into the Church.

Richard was one of the first to come under that power, which is almost beyond resistance—a manly, Christian character.

Henry did not talk it much, but how beautifully he lived it, and revealed the possibility in every workingman's life.

His constant effort was to bring the Church in the right light before the men and the union, and increase the solidity of the confidence in the minister, and his interest in them and their work.

This had grown upon them all, and David Dowling had come to be a potent factor in the organization. They no longer shivered in his presence, but now

crowded up to his great warm heart, as to an open fireplace in a world's winter.

Henry Fielding's life had completely changed within a few short months. The change was almost as great as a move from earth to the planet Mars—perhaps greater, for, after all, would that be so great?

Time is the large element in life's changes, and in unraveling mysteries and revealing destiny. Yesterday and to-day are not all. That makes a puzzle without an answer.

Henry had learned to say "to-morrow," and to believe in the future of a conscientious and sacrificial life.

Only a short period of time had intervened between the present condition, under a starry sky, and the first moment when he looked into the face of Grace Chalmers, and saw what his eyes had never seen before, and what no one else saw at that instant.

Those are visions not to be described, and feelings enveloped in too great a sanctity for exhibition.

But as no one knew what his eyes carried into the deeps of his soul, so no one knew the bitter condemnation of himself, and the imagination that there was something wrong with his head as well as his heart.

He almost instantly saw a great chasm appear between himself and his ideal of woman.

As the days passed, that deep, wide and dark obstruction seemed to grow deeper and wider and darker, but there are bridges over such depths. The world is not made to doom man to disappointment, and to cruelly mock him. Heroic honesty in life, and character, and purpose, is an architect almost divine.

Not all the reward of sacrifice is reserved for the upper world. In the plan and providence of God, the earth is good enough for some of it.

He had given himself in sublimest sacrifice for Elsie and others. He had unhesitatingly taken the bright star of hope from his own sky, and transferred it to hers. The money saved for himself and for the purchase of his ambitious dream, was lovingly laid in her hand. It was not lost. Even rheumatism could not be the robber. It was the most righteous and profitable investment. Dividends were never to be withheld.

The old home in Vermont had been sold, the indebtedness upon it paid, and the remnant of the money used to purchase a small, but beautiful, home for them in the suburbs of the city.

The change from the crowded and unattractive third-story rooms into this new and comfortable place was one of the strands for the bridge over the chasm. It was not accident or chance. It was intended. It brought him and Grace Chalmers nearer

together. There was distance and depth yet, but it was not so great.

There was another cable for the bridge, when Henry was promoted to the position of foreman in his department. It was one of the greatest surprises of his life, and still no one was more worthy of it.

For years his fidelity had never been relaxed. His quick eye and hand learned with great rapidity. It was most appropriate now that his ability and loyalty should be recognized.

The foreman had lost his position through some disagreement with the men and his employers both, and no greater astonishment could have been met than that of Henry when he was summoned to the office, and asked to accept the position. His salary was multiplied by three.

That elevation brought him nearer to the young woman whom he had ventured in almost audacity to more than admire.

During the year her father, who had been ill for several months, had died. His pride, which would have been the greatest obstacle, was thus removed. He had spoken to Henry, and even engaged in short conversation with him at the church, but never dreamed of the great secret in his heart.

This was the most gigantic barrier of all, and now the chasm was narrowing.

But the largest and strongest cable in the bridge

was his own surrender to Christ. There was not anything in the world so powerful in winning Grace Chalmers as the might and attraction of character.

She had liked Henry Fielding before. That surface element was changing into something deeper now. Her religion was the most real part of her life. It was the best part of any other life, in her estimation.

Her father had left her a small fortune in her own right, but she did not think of that, like most rich girls, as being the real value and the wealth of the world. To her, that was secondary to the eternal values.

If many girls of her standing in society were frivolous, and recognized not the wealth of goodness, she was not alone in her position. There are many young women, with fortunes of their own, who are not all for society, and show, and sham. She was not the exception. She was only a representative of a number.

She often said: "I care not what others do. I am first going to serve God, and in order to serve Him, I must serve others. That is the only way I can be like Him, or show my love for Him. I must live for God, by living for others. There is no other way."

What a simple thought, and yet it is the sublimest

philosophy of the world. It is Christianity—it only is Christianity.

Her own disposition and life was the greatest cable of all in the bridge. Reality could be in Henry Fielding's dream, because she was what she was.

Each day had added something to the strength of the unseen bridge, until the eventful and fateful night in December.

Henry ventured to step upon it, and cross to her side. To the deepest joy of his soul, and almost the deepest surprise, it did not break.

He had kept the precious secret for a whole day, and was making it known to Elsie the next evening, when suddenly there came a slight knock upon the door.

"I wonder why they don't ring the bell," said she, as she rose to go.

"Never mind, it is hard for you to get up. I will go," said Henry, and started for the door, without waiting for the bell.

What amazement as he looked out into the blinding snowstorm, now drifting all over the porch, to see a pale, emaciated, and almost frozen form in the doorway. A young man, so changed, but not beyond recognition. It was Will, their brother.

For an instant, Henry forgot his awful crime, and welcomed him as if nothing had ever happened. He seized him by the hand, and with the other hand

upon his left arm, almost drew him across the threshold.

Elsie was near the two brothers in an instant, and threw her crippled arms about his neck and kissed him.

She then flung herself into a chair, and sobbed as if her heart would break.

He seemed speechless, and too cold to talk.

They warmed him, and fed him, and waited patiently for explanation.

He commenced several times to tell the awful tragedy of these months of his life, but Henry and Elsie both kept saying:

"Wait, now, until you get warm. We have time enough."

But at last it came, and in such pathos, that they all wept together, as he pleaded for their forgiveness. He kept on saying: "I did not mean to do it. I did not know what I was doing. It was the poison that I had been drinking. Oh, God forgive me," he cried. "I have been in the place which they say is the doom of the lost. I know what it is. Remorse—remorse—remorse. No one can describe it. No one knows. I could not stand it longer. Now, I want to suffer the penalty. I am not only willing to, but I want to. I must."

He told them of the horror of that night in their old home. How he had fled, and walked, and ridden,

and hidden, all the way into Canada. There he concealed himself and his crime for months until conscience had driven him almost mad and made him feel that death was preferable to such a life. Neither a Hugo nor a Hawthorne ever made the picture of an awakened conscience too vivid. It is reality. It is suffering beyond all human agony. It had almost changed every feature of the man. It had forced its way into every drop of blood in his veins. It came as reality in the daytime, and as a ghost to frighten in the darkness. He could not escape. Conscience discovered his hiding-place, and forced him to seek another, only to instantly frighten and condemn him again.

"Oh," said he, "I wished I had done like George Roebling." He was one of their old neighbors, and went to school with them. They had been constant playmates in childhood.

"What did he do?" asked Henry.

"Why do you not know. He became a drunkard, too, but he did not strike his mother. He went away to the West to make his fortune, and gave great promises to his mother as to how he was going to come after her, and care for her all her life. But, instead of getting rich, he went into bad company, and, step by step, went down until he was the lowest of the low, a drunken tramp, and thus he wandered all the way back home to his mother, who had not

seen him for years, or heard from him. She received him into the old home, and cared for him, and told him to stay until he had conquered his appetite and temptation.

"One morning she gave him some money to go over the mountain, to a town where they were holding temperance meetings, and many men were being saved. He went, and she told us how she kissed him good-by and waved her handkerchief to him as far as she could see him, and then went back in the house and prayed as she had never prayed before.

"When he reached the place rain was falling, with a mixture of snow. He had no overcoat or umbrella. He went to the church, and it was closed. He tried to find the speaker, and could not. It was only four o'clock in the afternoon—four hours still before the meeting was to be held. No door was open to him, except the door of a saloon. He went in, and wrote a note to his mother like this," and Will could hardly push the words across his lips: "'Dear Mother—I am cold and wet. The church is closed. Everything is closed except the saloon. I am in the same misery. The old appetite is back again. I have been drinking; there is no hope for me. I know you will forgive me. It is for your sake as well as my own. Forgive me. Your boy, GEORGE."

"When he had written this note, he reached across

the bar, and seized a revolver which was lying there, and sent a bullet crashing through his brain.

"God knows that story was sad enough, but how much worse is mine? Would to Heaven I had killed myself before I struck the best woman who ever lived, but now I must pay for the crime. I have paid in part, but now I will pay it all."

He paused a moment, and then said:

"I did not come to trouble you. I will not disgrace you any more than I have. But I came this way to see you and ask forgiveness, and then go and give myself up."

"Oh, my," said Elsie, "you shall not do that. Cannot there be something done?"

Henry sat with his eyes to the table, and did not know what to say.

Elsie continued: "I will do anything for you. We will give up the home, or anything, rather than have you do that."

"No," said he, as he clenched his hand in firmness, and bit his lip. "I must do that, and only that. I cannot hide any longer. I must face the penalty."

Henry looked up, and said: "I would not see you suffer if I could help it, and you have my fullest forgiveness, but what other way is there out?"

"There is none," said he. "I do not want any. If I am paying the price of my crime, it will be the first and only peace I can get."

He remained with them only that one night. All persuasion failed, and his determination was immediately carried out.

The hard master, conscience, was obeyed.

The sentence of life imprisonment was the penalty, and the law of the harvest was proven again.

CHAPTER XII.

IS THIS A DREAM?

The week before a new home was to be established, and the harmony of two hearts united to make the sweetest music on earth, Henry was awakened in the night, at the end of a strikingly real dream.

It was one of those clear visions of the night hour, which seemed to possess almost as great, if not greater, reality than that which the eyes see in brightest light.

Everybody recognizes the experience of a sudden start and wakefulness in the night, and the first wonder—whether it is a dream or actual life.

He could hardly make himself believe he was not just what this peculiar part of human life had made him think he was. So vivid had been the lightning flash in the darkness that it kept his eyes open for an hour, and his thoughts rushing against and tumbling over each other. This dream might have had an introduction in the hours of some day, but he did not recognize it.

He had now seen himself suddenly transferred from foreman in the factory to the place of owner

and employer. Something like this had once been the star in his sky, but he had thought it a shooting star, and that it had fulfilled its mission and disappeared forever. He had changed his plan of investment, and all his savings had been placed in Elsie's life.

That was a mystery now, but it was the greatest treasure he ever had in this world or the next.

The strangest thing in human existence is the working of Providence, but it is, none the less, a certainty.

Plan, purpose and prayer do not always return in the same garments in which we dress them, as we send them out on their holy errand, but they return laden with richer blessing than hope or faith dared expect.

Henry Fielding had now at last reached his ideal, and desire had been satisfied, but it was a dream. Something only for a night, and a disappointment—a mushroom instead of an oak.

In his dreams he saw himsef at the head of a great business, conducting it on Chrisitian principles, and securing the interest and sympathy of all his employees. He had discovered the great secret. There was no clashing, and no outburst of jealousy. There were no bitter, biting sentiments being uttered on either side. There were no strikes, and no possibility

of them. The spirit of Christ was not foreign to the spirit of successful commercial enterprise. The Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount were not enemies of the employer or employees, either one.

That which awakened him was the sound of his own voice, and he was saying, "Heaven bless your union. Our interests are one."

He held the secret of his dream, but it would not say good-by to either his memory or imagination.

The day before the joyful sound of the wedding bells he had revealed the strange vision to Grace, and said he wished he might, for her sake, as well as his own, change his position, and attempt to reach the ideal of his life.

They were one in spirit and desire, to reveal Christ to the world, and especially to the workingmen. Never did two hearts carry sweeter love. There was no chasm—his wish was hers.

The proposition was made by her that a part of her money be used in the purchase of a site and the erection of buildings suitable for the same business as that in which he was now engaged, and that he be at the head of it, to try the effect of the Gospel, and example of Christ in every department of it.

After two years of hardest toil and almost rigid exemplification of the principles of his Christian life, Henry Fielding stood in the presence of all his employees, to say:

"The plan which has been adopted here so far will be continued. We will meet every six months, and talk over the interests of this business, because its welfare concerns you just as much as it does me. I propose that you shall have your just share of its profits. I shall not hold any selfish secret from you. I am not only willing, but desirous, that you shall know the condition of the business, and that you shall pass your opinion concerning the share which you think you should receive.

"The risk is mine, the plan and strain are mine, and I am confident that you will recognize all this. I am willing to trust you, and when I cannot, I must cease to conduct the business. I take you into my confidence, and I want you to call this your business. I do not believe much in some kinds of co-operation. Most all of the attempts in calculating and mathematical methods have failed; but I do believe in this kind of co-operation, and it is a vital part of my Christianity. If I cannot do business right, I will not do it at all. If I cannot do it as a Christian, I will not do it at all. If I cannot do it with your love, and deepest interest and satisfaction, I do not wish to do it at all. The little money that is in it is of minor and trivial importance. Of what value is money, when it rests in the selfish hand, or is the treasure of a slave-holder? Money is only good to invest in

other lives, and in eternal interests. That is the way I look at this business. It is the best channel for mutual helpfulness.

"If you have any grievance, don't hold it, and increase it, but come right to me, and we will talk it over as brother men should.

"Shall you continue to have your union? Yes. Make it just as valuable as you possibly can. Protect yourselves, and your fellow man. Protect your skill; secure the best legislation. Make the union an educational factor. Increase its power for good. Give the needy in it a share in your prosperity. Look after the sick and the sorrowing. Do not lose sight of the great object of your organization. I am not afraid of it. It is a friend to my factory, if we do as I have suggested, and as I have agreed to do by you. Mutual understanding and mutual sympathy is our salvation.

"I shake hands with every man of you, in a righteous compact to do my part. When you come to understand what it means to furnish the capital, and the risk, and the brains, and the nervous strain, you will not ask anything unjust. I wish you would consider me a member of the union. Of course, I cannot be, and yet, perhaps, that day will come—anyway, when the employer might be an honorary member. I don't see anything impossible or imprac-

ticable in my being at your meeting sometimes, or you might consider these meetings, each six months, as union meetings. I promise you it will be more for your good than any other gathering of the organization. At least, I want you all to count me as your best friend."

"We will, sir," came from all over the room, and in every man's heart there was an echo to every word he had uttered.

As they were separating, Henry Fielding hastened to one side of the room, to the side of a man who carried sorrow in his face, and said:

"Charles, I am in sympathy with you in the great loss of your little boy. I only heard of it to-day. I had a little brother die of scarlet fever, and your grief carried me right back to the old home and boyhood days. If I can serve you in any respect, I am ready to do it."

As he turned away, some man who had overheard the conversation whispered to another: "That man is a Christian."

His men were not machines. He knew them as best he could, and respected, yes, almost reverenced, manhood wherever he saw it.

He recognized them when he saw them, and the slight nod of the head brightened the world for a workingman, and drove him toward better things,

and to the side of Christ, because he always felt, if he did not say, "There goes a Christian."

The factory prospered. The men did not strike, and it was at last proven that "Godliness was profitable unto all things." "Did not Christ belong to a labor union?" Was this a dream?

THE END.

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